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REPTON SCHOOL SERMONS

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REPTON SCHOOL SERMONS

STUDIES IN THE RELIGION OF THE INCARNATION

Being the Sermons preached in Repton School Chapel between September 1910 *and July* 1912

BY

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PREFACE

These sermons are now published at the desire of a number of friends. It has seemed to me best to publish the whole series delivered in the first two years of my Headmastership rather than any selection.

Perhaps I may be allowed to take this opportunity of expressing some personal convictions concerning schoolboys and their religious life. I do not claim for them any particular value or authority, but I hold them and I want to state them.

(1) Boys, like other people, can understand a great deal more than they get credit for. Many people cannot learn, if to learn means to acquire large masses of information; but most people can think, and rather enjoy doing it. Moreover this capacity and enjoyment are commoner among boys than among their

elders, in whom the faculty is often atrophied. It is particularly true and important that many, who would find great difficulty in working out a train of ideas for themselves, yet find little difficulty and great pleasure in following out a train of ideas under someone else's guidance. Moreover the capacity to appreciate and understand is not to be measured by the capacity to reproduce; this is especially true in the case of boys, for whom the ordinary difficulty of restating what one has heard is increased by the peculiarities of their vocabulary, which I will speak of under the next heading.

(2) My experience confirms the opinion of the psychologists who tell us that most boys at the Public School age have a strongly mystical tendency. This is to be expected on account of the great emotional development which is characteristic of that period of life. But it is obscured by the fact that the boy is both unwilling and unable to give any verbal expression to this tendency. He is unwilling because it is something very new and curious in his experience; he is often a little frightened of it, and he is exceedingly frightened of other

people's contempt for it. And he is unable, because the words he is accustomed to use are valueless in this connexion, and he feels priggish if he tries to use others. No one would try to talk about Communion with God or home-affection or any other sacred and intimate thing, if he could use no other terms of approbation, except "Top-hole" and the like, without feeling a fool. But though unexpressed, the mystical tendency is there, and should be appealed to and developed.

(3) The most conspicuous good quality in boys is generosity. This usually operates within strictly confined limits, but it is there. And the ideal presented to them, therefore, should be the highest and the most exacting. Some would say—"Do not demand too much at first; lead them up to things gradually." That is just bad psychology. It is middle-age, not youth, which is likely to be alienated by a religion which demands big sacrifices.

Several expressions in these sermons, and some whole paragraphs, have already appeared in the volume of Essays entitled *Foundations*; nearly all of these are originally my own, but

one or two are borrowed from the other contributors to that volume. Other obligations too considerable to pass over are these. The close of Sermon XIX (which has already appeared in my book *The Kingdom of God*), I owe to recollections of a sermon preached by Dr. James at Rugby when I was a boy there; Sermon XXIII owes its leading idea to Professor Cairns, of Aberdeen; Sermon XXI was suggested by an address given to a gathering of Schoolmasters and College Tutors by the Rev. B. K. Cunningham; and Sermon XVIII owes much to the Rev A. E. J. Rawlinson, who also suggested the reference to Dionysus on p. 309.

But I should not venture to claim originality for anything contained in this volume.

W. T.

Almighty God, who hast knit together Thine elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical Body of Thy Son Christ our Lord; grant us grace so to follow Thy blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys which Thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I

THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES

October 2, 1910.

S. John, xv. 4, 5.—"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for apart from me ye can do nothing."

The little group, who had just shared with the Lord His last supper upon earth, had left the upper chamber, and were crossing the Temple court. There in front of them, trailing over the Temple Gate, was the great Golden Vine, the type of the life of Israel, entwined about the sanctuary of God. And, as they look at it, our Lord begins to speak—surely, with a hand pointing to this Vine, and with a gentle smile upon His face—"I am

the true Vine." It is the last of those seven parables of His Person and Mission, introduced by the words "I am," which are given us by S. John. In Christ the disciples were to find the fulfilment of that long search and hope which the Old Testament records through lawgiver, historian, prophet, and psalmist. All that life is summed up and completed in Him. He is the true Vine.

And we, His disciples, are the branches. He is not the trunk or the stem, on which we grow. He is the whole Vine, whose branches we are, for we are members of Christ, limbs of His Body; we are not something alien from Him which is grafted on to Him; we are part of Himself. All through the New Testament this astonishing doctrine is given an emphasis which no words of ours can possibly exaggerate. But what does it mean? How shall we even begin to understand it?

The Society which Christ founded to proclaim and carry on His redeeming work does not depend for its true life and character on the men who join it; that life and character are given to it by Christ. The Church is, in S. Paul's phrase, His Body—the instrument of

His Will and Spirit as His fleshly Body was in the days of His earthly ministry. The Church was founded by the Life, the Teaching, the Death, and Resurrection of Christ; it was not made by men; its first members did not construct it, but joined it; and if it should happen that through the infidelity of men the Church should cease for some years or some centuries to exist, yet even then the first man, who, by reading the New Testament, became a disciple of Christ, would not be a second founder of the Church; he would merely join the One Church, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic, to which all the saints belong. There is and there can be only one Church; however multiform its organisation, however varied in degree of adequacy its interpretation of the fact of Christ, still in its adherence to that one fact it is one, with a unity made not by its members but by Christ when in utter loneliness He bore the Cross from Jerusalem to Calvary.

Christ is the whole life of the Church; there is nothing we can bring to it; our function is to receive life from Him, and express his one Truth, realise His one Purpose, accord-

ing to our capacities. For though we can bring nothing to the Church's life, each of us has part of that life entrusted to him. So S. Paul tells the Corinthians: "Now ye are the Body of Christ, and members each in his part." There is some part of the Church's life which waits till we are willing to live it; and many of us are not willing.

Thus it comes that the language used by Saints and Theologians about the Church seems often to be exaggerated. What a contrast between the life of Christ Himself and the life of the Society which calls itself His Body! What a contrast between the tiny band of followers at supper with their Lord, who leads them afterwards to Gethsemane, and our well-dressed congregations worshipping with impressive ceremonial—and no agony or cross to follow! The metaphor of the Body seems to break down; but in our Lord's image of the Vine this consequence of faithlessness is provided for; "as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the Vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in Me"; and we can say just the same of the body and its limbs; the branch that is severed

from the Vine is no more dead than the hand or the foot that is severed from the body.

All of this is true to some extent of every society; its life is more than the sum of the lives of its members. An old school, such as ours, has characteristics and traditions which we do not create, but which the school impresses upon us; and here too, if we are to do the best either for the school or for ourselves, our first duty is loyalty to those traditions; our task is not so much to contribute to the life of the school, but rather to be true to its best traditions, that its life may be active in and through us. If we are careless of its honour, its honour for the time will perish; if we are neglectful of its welfare, it will not fare well; if we are arrogant or wilful, trying to impose upon it our own personalities, we shall break its historic life, and send it forward with the marks of our puny selves upon it, robbed of the great character which generations of devoted sons have given it.

But, after all, a school is still a human institution; men founded it and men have built it up; like every other human institution it ought to grow, always on its own lines,

but always to fuller usefulness. We do not claim for a school, as we claim for the Church, that it has within itself a principle of life which admits of no additional development; on the contrary, one of the tests of a school is to be found in its capacity to serve the nation and the Church according to their varying needs in successive generations. Only the Church, of all the institutions upon earth, possesses a final revelation; even the Church, it is true, must find in each age the way to apply the Gospel-message to that age's need; in the application of Christianity there is abundant room for development and variation; but Christianity itself is unchanging, for it consists in devotion to the Person and Will of Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and to whose revelation no addition can be made, for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead.

In Him then we must abide; but how? By dedicating our lives to His service; by fixing our minds on His teaching; by filling our souls with Himself.

We know where His service lies. It is not in the Chapel—there we really serve our-

selves rather than Him; we are the better for our prayers and praises, and the thanksgiving we offer is our bounden duty; and we believe that, because He loves us, He rejoices in our thanks; but still our Divine Service can never truly be rendered in our Chapel. That service is to be found wherever two human beings are brought together in any kind of relationship. The man who is not a Christian will always be thinking of himself, his own rights and welfare, however generous his impulses may be; but the Christian, who abides in Christ and Christ in him, has forgotten all about himself, and is ready for any call of duty and any opportunity of service. Our duty is generally quite plain; in the work our position in life brings to us, in the honour of school or house entrusted to our keeping, in the happiness of those whose happiness depends on us, we find our duty easily enough. But the opportunities of service are very easily missed; for we are content to give the sort of service that everyone about us expects; and we are afraid that if we do more than this our friends will regard us as eccentric and quixotic. That is exactly how they did

regard Christ. We must be on the look out for opportunities of service which no one except Christ expects of us. There are many people with whom we are in daily contact to whom we hardly give a thought; some of them, perhaps, are members of our own House; some are people we casually meet either here or at home; some are the servants who wait upon our wants and so give us the leisure to develop our minds and use them for our own and other people's good. Our attitude to all these people is often quite selfish—so selfish that we have never seen its selfishness; we do not dislike them; we never think about them; in our relation with them we are thinking only of ourselves. And perhaps we are even now saying to ourselves: "I don't see any way of being serviceable to so-and-so;" but have we ever really looked?

It is impossible to over-estimate the difference it would make if all professing Christians had thus fulfilled Christ's great command of self-denial, which means self-forgetfulness; to mention only two results—the social problem would be solved, and the evangelisation of the world would be accomplished. And for most

of us here the command comes in its most urgent form; for most of us have not yet chosen our life's work. That is the most important choice a man ever makes; and to make it on selfish grounds is the greatest sin a man can ever commit; for to choose our life's work on selfish grounds is deliberately to devote the greater part of our time to service of self, while we leave a residue, or none at all, for Christ. The one and only thing for a Christian to consider as he approaches that choice is the question how and where he can be of most use to God and man. But that choice will be made on selfish grounds, and we shall be guilty of that greatest of all sins, if when we make it we are not already purged of selfishness. Let us begin now our self-dedication; let us form now the habit of seeking opportunities of service.

It is from Christ's teaching that we have learnt this duty; and only by faithful and constant study of that teaching can we hope to perform the duty we have learnt. But some of us must confess that we have studied and still do not perform; we have prayed, but our lives are unchanged; we have struggled,

but our habits are too strong for us ; we have received into ourselves the Body broken and the Blood shed, fully determined that our lives should be guided by the spirit of that sacrifice—that, strengthened by that Body and purified by that Blood, we would break our own bodies, if need be, for the service of men ; and nothing seems to come of it.

"Abide in Me ; and I in you." Behind the teaching stands the Lord Himself. It is from Him that our life is drawn. If we will cease to strive and fret, and will lay our lives in His hands, He will guide us. He has been lifted up from the earth that He might draw us to Him. Let us pray to Him and read of Him ; but above all, with our mind's eye let us see Him, and keep constantly before us the tenderness of His smile, the terror of His frown, the exacting demand and unfailing inspiration of His love.

Reptonians, we are members of a school which can be the Christian Church in miniature. At any time of change, such as is marked by the coming of a new Headmaster,

it is well that we should go back to first principles, and remind ourselves where we stand. We are members of an ancient school and a Christian school; it is a living society which we join, and do not make; from it we receive the life it has been gathering for centuries; only one kind of change can we loyally desire for it, the change that shall make it perpetually more and more a Christian school, serving the nation and the Church, and sending out sons to serve the nation and the Church. Into its life I am come—the newest of the new-comers this term; for an engagement made many months ago, and of a kind not to be cancelled or altered at short notice, kept me working for the Student Christian Union in Australia till it was too late for me to arrive here at the opening of term. That means that I must learn my task in the full pressure of the term's work, trying to catch the spirit of the place and in all loyalty to its traditions. Pray for me; God, I believe, called me to this responsibility, but only by the help of your prayers can I hope to discharge it.

I know the man whose place I am to occupy,

and something of his work here; you know him too. He did great work for the school; and nothing that he accomplished is so precious as that religious life which he laboured devotedly and successfully to foster.

Of the school itself I know at present little more than all of us know about schools we have only visited; but that much serves to bear out my predecessor's summary of its characteristics: "The school stands now firm-footed among the Public Schools of England —known among them as conspicuous for the beauty of its surroundings, the honourable traditions of its scholarship, the distinction of its athletics, and the simplicity and modesty of its sons."

One boast we can make, prouder than any other school can make; though not very large in numbers we have more men serving Christ in the front of His battle in the Foreign Mission field than any other Public School in England. The spirit of a school is not shown chiefly in its most illustrious individuals, but in its typical and ordinary members. That we should have so many school-fellows giving their lives to obey the primary command of

Christ is no small thing; God grant that we may not slacken in that obedience.

The call to service is more insistent than it has ever been since the days of the primitive Church. We know now, as men did not know till recently, the condition of the various nations of the earth; we know their need of what the Church can give. And we know, too, the need of our own poor at home. The problem of the Foreign Mission field and the social problem are together the call which God is making to the Church of our day. And those problems cannot be solved by thinking, though they need more thought than we give them; they can only be solved by a new spirit—the spirit of Christ—possessing our lives and determining our conduct. And of ourselves we can never acquire that new spirit; never through the effort made by self can self be put aside. But indeed we do not even altogether desire that new spirit; for it will cut across our schemes, it will trample on our ambitions; it will bring us peace, but not the peace of indolence which we love; it will bring us victory, but not the victory of pride for which we long; it is the spirit of King-

ship, but in a Kingdom not of this world, whose throne is a gallows and the crown made of thorns. When all is said and done, we do not wholly want to be like Christ. Yet with our best powers we do desire it; like S. Peter we deny Him; yet, like S. Peter, we mean it when we say, "Lord I am ready to go with Thee both into prison and to death." When this true desire is strong in us, let us fill our souls with the remembrance of His love, and do what we can to commit and bind ourselves to His service. Every time we make the thought of His love real to ourselves another barrier is broken down. In the soul where Christ abides there is no room for what is contrary to His will. He calls us to take up the cross; we are to share with Him the burden of the world's misery and sin; but He, too, is bearing it, with His Almighty power, and, therefore, we know that for us, however weak we may be, the yoke from which we shrink is easy, and the burden, whose weight we fear, is light.

"I am the Vine; ye are the branches." The Vine lives to give its life for the joy of

men. The moment its luxuriance is complete, the moment its fruit is full, it is stripped bare that men may drink its wine ; and again bears fruit next year :

> "Not bitter for the torment undergone,
> Not barren for the fulness yielded up."

Such is the life we draw from Christ and share with Him.

"Abide in me, and I in you." Even so, Lord Jesus.

II

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD

October 9, 1910.

S. Luke, xi. 2.—"When ye pray, say, Our Father."

It is Our Father, not My Father. Throughout the prayer we use the plural number—"Forgive us our trespasses," not "forgive me mine." Give us *our* daily bread"—all Christ's hungry ones, not only ourselves nor chiefly ourselves, should be in our thoughts.

For who are "we," of whom we say Our Father? He is the Father of all men, and "we" who are His children and rightly call Him Father are all men. All mankind with all the diversities, not one Church or nation, but all mankind as God has made them. How did the Church first spread beyond the immediate followers of our Lord? It was on

that first Whitsun Day when the disciples spoke in the power of the Holy Spirit and men said as they listened—"How hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes, and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God." In our tongues; for only when it is spoken in all tongues is the full meaning of the Spirit expressed. The unsearchable riches of Christ can never be possessed by any single nation or any civilisation; only the Universal Church can possess them all, only the Universal Church is truly the Body of Christ, and only so far as we are in spirit members of that Universal Church can we be members of that Body.

We need very much to realise more fully the Family to which we belong. Let us learn anew to be loyal members of that great Family, clinging to the truth as it has been given to

us, but not eager to force our way of reaching it on others. And so in realising our membership in the universal family we shall be able to say with full meaning, Our Father.

But who is our Father? We have not seen Him; but we know Him. We know Him through all His children—every one of them is made in His image, and from every one we may learn something of our Father. But we are not left to piece together our conception of Him out of such fragmentary hints, with the assistance of our own moral faculties. We know Him fully through His only begotten Son Jesus Christ. *He* is the Word of God—the means by which God makes known to us His character and His method of dealing with the men whom He has made.

God's character is revealed to us in Jesus Christ. And how then can we approach Him? How can we dare to intrude into that Presence, the Presence of Almighty Power combined with Perfect Holiness? Must we not shrink away ashamed? We dare not let ourselves appear, with all our sins and follies, in the searching light of that Purity and Wisdom.

If we speak or feel like that, we have not yet learnt the truth of Christ. If we really believe that God was revealed in Christ—that God is like Christ—the question we shall ask is not "How dare we come?" but "How can we stay away?" He is waiting for us, yearning over us. We cannot pain Him by standing far away, indifferent. Do we feel unfit to be near Him? Let us remember the woman who was a sinner, who came uninvited to the Pharisee's house, and washed His feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head—"Her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much." Do we feel the burden of our sin? Then it is just to us that His invitation is offered—"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden." Do we feel powerless to come—the pleasures of our selfish life are so attractive, the net which our worldly interests have cast about us is so strong? Let us hear His own words of promise—"I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will *draw* all men unto Me."

Indeed, if we are drawn to God by Christ, our past sins are no obstacle to our coming. For how does He regard those sins? Not

with anger—still less with a condoning weakness that merely ignores our wickedness and folly. No, He regards our sins with utter anguish. The Cross and Passion of Jesus Christ is the symbol of what our sins cost God. His attitude to our self-will and enmity is the attitude of Christ to His enemies. "When He was reviled He reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not." And if we have understood this, which is the central truth in the revelation of God through Christ, then we see at once that our past sin need not hold us back from drawing near to God; we no longer fear to approach God, we fear only to inflict the wounds that we inflict when we sin; we are filled indeed with fear, with shuddering dread—but it is not fear of His anger or the punishment it will award, it is dread of wounding the tenderest of all hearts, of stabbing with our ingratitude our most loving Father. It is not His anger that we fear; no—"There is *mercy* with Thee; *therefore* shalt Thou be feared."

And thus we know that His love does not rebuke our coming on account of past sin, but only the continuance in sin that hinders

our coming. Gradually the knowledge that He loves us so unutterably breaks down our selfishness, our hostility or indifference; gradually our hearts learn to respond, till at last we love Him perfectly. This is the Atonement of the world. In Christ we see the love of God; in Christ's Cross and Passion we see the pain our sin brings to Him and the uncomplaining patience with which He bears it; and more than uncomplaining, for in the very climax of His agony He cries out "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." We cannot for ever go on wounding One who bears our blows like that; we yield by degrees to the irresistible power of His unceasing love; by being lifted up from the earth upon His Cross, He draws us to Him, and so our Atonement is made.

It is through Christ that we know our Father; through Him we know the love that makes our past sins no obstacle to coming, and gradually weans us from them by revealing the pain they cause; through Him we are drawn by the power of love to leave our sins and come to God—to our Father.

But what is meant by "coming" to Him?

How did the Lord Himself understand coming to the Father? We find it in the great prayer in which He dedicates Himself to the final sacrifice—when His hour is come, the hour at once of His glory and His suffering. "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee. . . . . I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. . . . . And now I come to Thee." When the self-surrender is complete, when He has taken God's will as His own, even to the point of offering Himself a willing victim, then He comes fully to the Father. To come to Him, then, is to take His will as our own. And to-day what we need is to come to Him in this sense; not to feel thrills of excitement nor blissful repose. The excitement may do no good, or even by reaction make us more sluggish than before; and the repose may be undeserved, and if so is unjustifiable; we need to come to Him as Christ came, calmly and deliberately making again our act of self-surrender, more completely this time than ever before, and so

uniting ourselves with the whole life of God. In this same prayer of Christ's we find that He speaks of being glorified with the eternal glory of God just as He prepares for the Passion and Death. God is Love; He lives for His children, agonising over them in the redemptive sacrifice. We are united with Him when we return His love, and enter with Him, and for love of Him, into His redemptive work and sacrifice; we are united with Him when, forgiven ourselves, we join with Him, and for love of Him, in helping those others for whose love He yearns as He yearned for ours while we still withheld it.

And we know where we shall find His work. We shall find it far away among all those of His children who have never even heard of His love for them; we shall find it all over the world, wherever men are in sorrow, or want, or sin; we shall find it in our own nations in the monstrous social and industrial organisation which makes God's children struggle against each other even for daily bread. Throughout the world, abroad and at home, the love of God, of our Father, is winning its way by pain and struggle; throughout the world, abroad and at home,

there is the opportunity for self-dedication, self-surrender, self-sacrifice even to death.

If we have felt the love of God, can we hold back? Yes, alas! we can, and we do. For the enticements of our selfish pleasures are still about us. We have felt something of that love; we have seen something of the cruel pain our selfishness inflicts—the pain as of hands nailed to a cross, and desertion by friends and, as it seemed, by God Himself.

We know God's love for us; yet still our love for Him is cold and feeble.

That is why our times of worship may be precious to us. We want to love Him—want that more than anything else in the world. And we come here to think again of His love—our Father's love; for we know that every time we make that real to ourselves another barrier is broken down. Solemnly and with firm wills we come again to our Father; we take His will as our own. We know that very soon the world will be with us again. Let us linger now in the thought of His love, and make our act of dedication as complete and as permanent as ever we can.

And in that perfect service we find our brotherhood with one another. While each of us has his own purpose in life we can never be filled with one purpose; while every Church or sect is concerned with its own position in rivalry against others, there will be no universal Church. But when we have been conquered by the love of God, and freely accept, each one of us, God's purpose, we shall find ourselves united without striving for union. We shall know that we are all truly brothers when we have realised that one God is our Father.

And in this same perfect service we shall find peace for ourselves. It is no taskmaster to whose will we bow; it is no awful monarch whose command we obey. He, the Eternal and Almighty, is our Father, to whose love we yield in answering love. No sorrow can make us wretched; no anxiety can make us despond; no perplexity can baffle us, no opposition overcome. For God is Almighty, and He is our Father, and we may "repose in perfect peace on the everlasting arms of His fatherly love."

III

CHRIST THE HERO

October 23, 1910.

S. Mark, x. 32.—"And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them and they were amazed; and they that followed were afraid."

The appeal of Christ is an appeal for heroism, and it is addressed to heroes. In our country Christianity has been established for a long time, and we take it for granted as a normal thing; but then our Christianity amounts to very little; it does not urge us to action which we should never dream of taking without it. The Christianity of Christ is something very different from our quiet acquiescence in Christian doctrines. It was a fiery zeal which led men to face and suffer anything. It was a heroic faith.

Heroism is the same in every age. I wonder if any of you know the story of the

Republic which was set up in Rome in 1848 to stand for liberty and justice; it was attacked by the old corrupt governments which surrounded it and which it had displaced, and Rome was besieged. It resisted for more weeks than the wiseacres supposed it could stand days, but at last it fell. On the day when the terms of capitulation were signed a vast concourse gathered in the open space in front of S. Peter's, and there rode into the middle the man whose faith and courage had sustained them throughout—Garibaldi. When at last the cheering had died down, he said: "I am going out from Rome. I offer neither quarters, nor provisions, nor wages. I offer hunger, thirst, forced marches, battles, and death. Let him who loves his country with his heart, and not with his lips only, follow me." They streamed after him into the hills, and because of his heroism and theirs, the kingdom of Italy is a fact in the world to-day.

"I offer neither quarters, nor provisions, nor wages. I offer hunger, thirst, forced marches, battles, death." It is in the very spirit of Christ's invitation: "If any man

will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me." It is the appeal to heroes. The cross meant nothing symbolic in those days. No one would then have dreamt of speaking of the various little plagues of life as a cross which had to be borne. The cross was the ordinary gallows of the time and place. Our Lord is literally demanding of those who would follow Him that they should put the rope round their necks; they are to be ready for literally anything. "Hunger, thirst, forced marches, death"—that is what many of Christ's closest followers have received in the Foreign Mission field. There is no appeal to selfishness; there is no offer of reward except the reward of sharing the life and sufferings of Christ, which are the life and sufferings of God.

And as we look back over the history of the Church, the men who stand out as pre-eminently Christian are not, as some seem to suppose, weak and diffident men, but strong, heroic men. They are the men who have risked their lives and endured all manner of hardship that they may bring to the knowledge of Christ those who have not heard of

Him. They are the men who have dared to resist the public opinion of their time and to be ostracised by society, that they may bring some new department of life beneath the sway of Christ's authority. And it is in that heroic band that we are called to bear a part.

We all want to be strong and brave; but how are we to find more strength and courage than we happen to have by nature? We always win courage from other people who are brave; and we need to realise our fellowship with the great Christian heroes if we are to become heroic. As men in a regiment derive courage from each other, so we may draw courage from the sense that we are fighting side by side with them. But if all our lives are to be inspired there is no cause great enough except the cause of God, nor is there anywhere sufficient attraction to draw us except the revelation of the love of God in Christ. We shall reach our full height of courage only through constant communion with Christ.

For He is the hero of all the heroes in the world. We sing, "Jesus, meek and gentle." Yes; meek and gentle when meekness and

gentleness are the qualities required. But not always. Think of how on His first visit to Jerusalem after the beginning of His ministry He went into the Temple court and on His own sole authority drove out men who were carrying on a trade which had the sanction of custom if not of law, paralysing the people, as it would seem, by the sheer dominance of His will, rolling furniture about in a fury of righteous rage. Meek and gentle! Or think of Him again on that day which fixed itself in the imagination of the disciples: "They were in the way going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus went before them, and they were amazed; and they that followed were afraid." We see Him striding on before them with a ferocity in His manner that inspires dread; for He is going to Jerusalem, and He knows what awaits Him there.

And I think that this is the vision of Christ which we most of all require in this day of the Church's need—Christ striding on to the place of sacrifice, and we, His disciples, following Him, wondering and afraid; wondering because we do not know to what He leads us; and afraid, because if our Christianity has

never frightened us, we have not found out what it is.

And now is the opportunity. Look at all the nations of the world : Europe and America are in social upheaval, and what is to give them rest ? Japan is leading the nations of the East—where to ? China is waking from long lethargy to new life—what sort of life ? India is hurrying at break-neck speed in no direction in particular. And we claim that we know the secret of life ; we profess to believe that in Christ is revealed the secret of life in all its phases, private and public. We give to the Eastern nations our materialism and our agnosticism ; the one thing we withhold is the gospel of salvation. Christ still strides forward to the place of sacrifice ; but they are few who follow.

Do not suppose that you can serve Christ without facing pain ? Not everyone is called actually to suffer ; but all are called to be ready to suffer. A comfortable Christianity is a contradiction in terms. People sometimes speak of the " consolations of religion," as if Christ's primary object had been to administer consolations. But it wasn't. His primary

object was to found the Kingdom of God upon earth, and to pay the cost at which alone that could be done. And He calls us to share His labour and His peril. Men will come again to believe in the power of Christianity, when they see it inspiring men to heroic action, and we shall rise to the full height of our being when we set ourselves heroically to follow the Hero Christ.

IV

CHRISTIAN PRAYER

November 13, 1910.

S. Matthew vi. 9.—"After this manner therefore pray ye."

Our difficulties about prayer arise very largely from our wrong ideas of it and the wrong use which we try to make of it. We often regard it as an effort to persuade God to do what we want, and indeed we often make such an effort in our prayers. But as soon as we stop to think we see that such an effort is bound to be fruitless and that the very attempt to make it is wrong. It is bonnd to be futile, for it is absurd to suppose that our utterances can thus change the purpose of God; our needs may move His pity, but He knows our needs without our praying at all; He "knows our necessities before we ask." And the attempt to change the purpose

of God is wrong as well as futile, for He always wills what is best for us and all His children, and the substitution of our purpose for His could only be a change for the worse.

What, then, is prayer? It is the recognition that the good things which we need can only come from God; and very often it is only when we recognise this that they are good for us. When we are ill, certain kinds of food, which are wholesome for healthy people, are very bad for us. So there may be blessings which for us, owing to our bad spiritual state, would be more like curses; and God who always gives us what is good for us, may be waiting for some change in our hearts which will make us fit recipients of His blessing. We may imagine a man, who seldom or never thinks of God, struggling against a very great temptation; we may imagine him as a man who would only be confirmed in his neglect of God if by his own efforts he overcame the temptation so that it ceased to trouble him: will it not be better for such a man that he should still be troubled by the temptation? But if he comes to recognise that God is the source of all his moral strength and that only in power given

by God can he overcome the temptation, then the danger is removed; his victory now can be no harm to him or to anybody, and God, who has been waiting to give the blessing until it shall really bless, bestows upon him the peace he desires. God gives us what it is good for us to receive; but what that may be depends upon our spiritual state, that is to say upon the conformity of our lives to the will of God. If we are wholly conformed to the will of God, all our desires will be in accord with His, and all our prayers will be answered.

The Lord's Prayer was taught as a pattern of prayer—not merely as one prayer to be offered among others, but as the model on which our prayers were to be framed. And yet it is exceedingly unlike our usual prayers, and we find it very difficult to say with any real meaning. Most of us probably find it difficult to join in it with our hearts until we come to "Forgive us our trespasses," though if we were really poor we could probably pray for "daily bread." The opening phrases of the prayer pass over us. For our habit in prayer is to present our selfish needs to God.

But Christ teaches us to put in the forefront the glory and purpose of God. "Hallowed be *Thy* name, *Thy* Kingdom come, *Thy* will be done—in earth as it is in heaven." As a rule we can't really pray that; we don't want these things, and we cannot pray for what we do not want, because prayer is the bringing of our wants before God. Yet these are the first desires which should arise in our minds as we turn to God. The Lord's Prayer has been compared to a letter sent home to his King by a public servant working on an empire's frontier. He begins by saying that his chief concern is for his master's honour—"Hallowed be Thy Name"; and that men may acknowledge his authority and obey him—"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done;" he goes on to ask for himself enough to sustain him in the work he does—but not for more than that; he begs forgiveness for past failings, that no temptations other than those incidental to his work may befall him, and that he may be delivered from the hostile forces which actually hold him back—"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"; and he commends his request by repeating that it is only

for his master's cause that he cares—"For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory."

How utterly unselfish it is; and how vast in its scope. We forget about ourselves; we pray for our bare necessities, but not for the pleasures we desire or for the success of our plans; and our first petition is that God's Name may be hallowed, His Kingdom come and His Will be done in earth as it is in heaven—not in ourselves, or in our families, or in our school, or in our country, but in earth. And it is His Purpose and not our own of which we are to think.

Compare our prayers with that? Do we in our own prayers think at all about the glory of God or the coming of His Kingdom? Do we think about the conversion of Asia and Africa, or the conformity of our own national life to the standards of Christ? No; not as a rule. We say the great words, but we mean nothing by them. We do not pray "Thy will be done" with triumphant expectation and ungovernable hope; we are more liable to say, "Well, God's will be done." when we find we cannot have our own way,

and fall back reluctantly upon what we regard as a second best.

Yet that petition—"Thy will be done"—contains within itself the whole essence of all true Christian prayer. When we add to our prayers the words "through Jesus Christ our Lord," or "for the sake of Jesus Christ," we are fulfilling our Lord's command that we should pray in His Name. "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you. Hitherto ye have asked"—so many things; prayer after prayer has been uttered and so few have been granted—"Hitherto ye have asked nothing in My name." When a man acts in the name of another, he acts as that other's representative and on his behalf; and it is as Christ's representatives that we are to pray. So, when we offer our prayers "through Jesus Christ," or "for His sake," we mean (or ought to mean) that if our petition is not according to the will of Christ we do not wish it to be granted.

This does not mean, I think, that we are wrong in bringing before God the various desires of our hearts, if only they are innocent. We know that our Father desires our happi-

ness, and we are right to pray for what will increase our happiness. But there may be times when it is not good for us to have what we should like, or when our pleasure can only be won at the cost of another's pain; and then our prayer will not be granted, and, indeed, we ourselves have unconsciously prayed that it shall not be granted by offering our prayer in the name of Christ. "Not my will, but Thine, be done" is the very essence of all prayer.

Sometimes we may be pretty clear what the will of God is; when we pray for the conversion of the world, for peace among the nations, for justice in our social life at home, for purity in our own hearts, we know that we are praying that God's will may be done. But very often we do not know what His will may be; there is some ambition or desire which we long to satisfy, and we pray God to grant us what we wish, but we must always add, "if it be Thy will"; "not my will, but Thine be done."

And so the one great requisite of prayer is faith—not indeed the belief that what we ask will happen, but faith in God as the author

and giver of all good things. We put ourselves and our desires in His hands, knowing that he will do what is best. It may be that our failure in the past to recognise Him as the source of all blessing has been the obstacle which prevented His giving us what He longed to give. Our faith as it were releases His bounty, because it makes us able to receive it without harm; it is our spiritual health, in which we can receive what for the selfish unbelieving man would only add virulence to his disease.

Here we must remember that in all God's dealings with men there can be no question of merit and reward. We cannot deserve any blessing. Our faith does not win it as a reward. And therefore the faith of one may win blessing for another: this is the case with intercessory prayer. As the evil in the world is conquered by vicarious suffering, so many blessings are granted in answer to intercession, which is vicarious faith.

But along with faith we need to exercise thought and imagination, if we are to pray as Christ teaches His disciples to pray. If we are to mean—if we are even to understand—

what we say in the Lord's Prayer, and if our prayers are to be fashioned on that model, we must employ all our faculties. "Hallowed be Thy Name, in earth as it is in heaven"; "Thy Kingdom come, in earth as it is in heaven"; "Thy Will be done, in earth as it is in Heaven." No one is going to pray that if the only time he gives to prayer is the last few minutes before getting into bed, and the first few after getting out—the sleepiest moments of the day. Prayer is very difficult and needs all our strength; it is the most difficult thing that any man ever attempts to do, for it is the effort to see the world through God's eyes, and to give ourselves wholly to His will.

Our prayers are not like the Lord's Prayer; they are more like the prayer of the sons of Zebedee: "We would that Thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall ask of Thee." And for such there is only one answer: "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of?"

V

THE CITIZENSHIP OF HEAVEN

December 4, 1910.

Philippians, iii. 20.—"Our citizenship is in heaven."

All through the New Testament runs the contrast between earth and heaven; we pray that God's Name may be hallowed, His Kingdom come, His Will be done, in earth as it is in heaven; we are bidden to lay up treasure not on earth but in heaven; we are reminded that as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy, and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

But this contrast is not between two places, earth being here and heaven somewhere else; nor is it adequately expressed as a contrast of two states, the one of struggle and suffering, the other of blessedness and peace. The contrast is between two objects of loyalty, two

standards of value, two methods of work. "This world" is the whole fellowship of those who trust in wealth, in material power, in clamour and agitation, and who aim at what can be secured by these. "Heaven" is the whole fellowship of those who trust in love, in spiritual force, in prayer and meditation, and who aim at what these can bring. And some there always are who try to reach the heavenly goal by earthly methods. They always fail, not only because the Kingdom of God can never be a Kingdom "of this world," but also because in their use of the worldly method they forget the heavenly goal.

Our world just now[1] is full of uproar and the strife of tongues. All the hubbub of our half-civilised politics is raging. Many of those engaged on behalf of all the parties are pursuing worldly ends by worldly methods; many pursue heavenly ends by worldly methods; some few pursue God's ends by God's own methods—only we can hardly hear their voices at such a time.

What do we want for our country? We want it to be prosperous, and strong, and

[1] The eve of a General Election.

respected by other nations. That is the worldly end; not wrong, but not the highest. We are right to aim at this if it does not absorb all our thoughts, or usurp the chief place. But that is "of this world," and the methods of this world may help us.

And we want our country to be ordered with justice and governed with purity; we want to end the undeserved distress, the waste of sacred faculties of intellect and imagination, the hideous grinding down of spiritual capacity, which our stage of civilisation is inflicting on the largest class of our fellow-citizens. For that, too, the methods of this world may help us; but alone they can do nothing. The solution of our social problem will require legislation; but first and foremost we need the changed spirit, that is not "of this world" but of heaven, which will enable and even force us to do God's will on earth as it is done in heaven.

And we want our country to be serving the true progress of mankind; and for that the methods of this world are of no use whatever. We cannot by agitation or by canvassing persuade men to put the claim of God and

Humanity before the claim of a single nation; only when all the citizens are self-denying shall we taste the joy of national self-devotion to the cause of God. Here the method of heaven, which is sacrifice, is the only one that is efficient. And up and down the country, in the work of Churches and Chapels, in Adult Schools and Home Reading Unions, in the Workers' Educational Association, are forces far stronger to mould the nation's future than any that clash and rattle against each other in the election turmoil.

Remember Elijah's vision. "Behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still, small voice."

Let us take an example from elsewhere. The old Greek States struggled and fought for material supremacy; and no doubt the old Greeks thought the results of those struggles overwhelmingly important. But consider it.

There was an Athenian Empire, and no one was the better or the worse; there was a Spartan supremacy, and no one was the better or the worse; there was a Theban predominance, and no one was the better or the worse. Similar things happened in other places, whose history we do not read. Assyria and Babylon had vast empires, comparable to the Roman or to our own, whose sole significance is that they affected the despised little country of the Jews. But Greece is memorable, not for Athenian triremes or the Macedonian phalanx, but because a man called Aeschylus stood amazed at the working of the Divine Justice, and another called Sophocles saw and uttered the perfect grace of life's deep peace and beauty; because Euripides was touched with the sorrows of common folk, and Plato dreamed a "vision of all time and all existence."

Which did their world of their day think most of—Cæsar or Christ? And which has actually done most?

But Christ's Kingdom is not "of this world." He Himself points the contrast. "They which are accounted to rule over the

Gentiles lord it over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you . . . whosoever would be first among you shall be servant of all." This world laughs, as it laughed under the Cross; "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." The point it picks out for derision is the very source of irresistible power. For this world believes in force; it worships the Great Beast of the Book of Revelation; but the world is governed, not by force but by suffering, and the Word of God which goes forth conquering and to conquer must first be set forth as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

To which is our loyalty given—to this world or to heaven? "Our citizenship is in heaven," says S. Paul. But what is the charter of that citizenship, and what is the policy of that State?

The charter is the long record of man's intercourse with God and growth in the knowledge of God, which we call the Bible. And on this Bible Sunday we do well to consider afresh the nature of that charter. In it we find what are the spiritual forces on which our reliance is to be placed, and the

end for which they are to be used. We shall not go to it for exact statements as to how the earth was made; or what were the precise occurrences in the history of the peoples it deals with. When it mentions such things it may be right or it may be wrong; if we are interested, we shall try to find out; but we shall not suppose that the value of the book is affected one way or the other. Nor shall we go to the Bible either intending to accept the moral standards of its various authors, or liable to be distressed if those standards are other than that of Christ. If Deborah blesses Jael for a most treacherous murder; or if a Jewish patriot praises Rahab for her peculiarly base act of treason to her own town of Jericho, we are neither perplexed nor distressed. We only notice, what we should expect, that men could at first only receive a small part of the truth of God, and gradually received more and more as they lived by what they knew already. At first, understanding God's loving care for Israel, they did not perceive His equal care for all other nations; but they lived, or at least their great saints lived, by the light of what they knew, and so became fit for a fuller

understanding of the God with whom they were in perpetual communion, till Amos proclaimed His sole sovereignty, and Hosea learnt something of the tenderness of His love, and Isaiah upheld His righteousness as the one standard of political life, and Jeremiah discovered the secret of suffering, and Ezekiel taught individual responsibility, and the unknown Prophet of the Exile gazed as from afar on the Divine Agony of Redemption.

And we go back to the old record, not for dead facts, which may or may not be recorded with minute accuracy—what matter?—but for the living spirit. There in the Historical Books we find the writers utterly convinced that human history is altogether in the hands of God. We don't believe that; we think we control it with our diplomacies and our armaments. In the Prophets we find a certain knowledge that the safety of a nation depends on its fulfilment of God's purpose for it. We don't believe that; we think it depends on Dreadnoughts. In the Psalms we find a deep longing after God—"Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O *God*. My soul is athirst for

God, yea even for the living *God;* when shall I come to appear before the presence of *God*" ; or again, " Thou, O Lord God, art the thing that I long for" ; or, again, " in Thy Presence is the fulness of joy, and at Thy right hand there is pleasure for evermore." We don't believe that; we are liable to find worship rather tedious So we go back to these old saints to catch their fire by a spiritual infection, and to learn from them how we too may live in communion with God as they lived. There we find all the main elements of a complete religious life expressed with the freshness of a fresh apprehension, and nowhere else can we learn the lesson of religion so well. But we always feel that they are unsatisfied; they are groping and feeling after something they never reach. And this charter of our heavenly citizenship only finds its climax and the expression of its full meaning in the Life and Teaching of Christ. " Blessed are the meek ; for they shalt inherit the earth." Christ is claiming that inheritance ; and it is His meekness that wins it for Him, His unresisting suffering, His complete forgetfulness of self.

Heaven is the fellowship of those pledged to the service of God on this earth or elsewhere. Here the service of God and of Man are one and the same. If our citizenship is in Heaven, two results must follow. Our lives will be dedicated to the service of man ; but also we shall know that the truly efficient way to serve them is not by driving and hustling, by canvass or agitation, but by appeal to the hidden sources of life, by meekness and gentleness, by absolute self-sacrifice. And we shall know that the greatest service we can render to those who do not know the history of man's discovery of spiritual power, is to give them that history, which we call the Bible, in their own language. To-night we have the opportunity of helping in that work. The British and Foreign Bible Society, for which our offerings are asked, exists to make the charter of our citizenship known among all the nations of the world. Let us test the loyalty of our citizenship by the efforts to which it prompts.

"Our citizenship is in heaven." We belong to the fellowship of those who are dedicated

to God's will. Heaven is the Life Divine; and the Life Divine is revealed to us by Christ. It is the Life, not of force but of weakness; not of splendour but of humiliation; not of empire, but of service; yet it rules the world; for in human affairs all force is operative only as human will directs it; and the will of man cannot resist the appeal of the sacrifice of Love.

Such is its method; and its aim is its own expansion, till Heaven at last includes all mankind, when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, and God's will is done by all his children.

VI

THE SEVERITY OF CHRIST

December 18, 1910.

S. Luke, ix. 57–62.—"And as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But he said unto him, Leave the dead to bury their own dead; but go thou and publish abroad the kingdom of God. And another also said, I will follow thee, Lord; but first suffer me to bid farewell to them that are at my house. But Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

How stern the replies are! The first of the three men comes of himself; he is not called; he offers himself as a disciple and a follower. He gets no word of welcome—only the warning that he is choosing to share the life

of an outcast. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." The second He calls Himself; the man is ready to come, but he has family ties; he asks only that he may wait and see his old father into his grave, and then he will come. Surely that is a right request; surely the gracious and tender Christ will respect the claims of family affection. No; not just now; there are more important things than that just now. New life is come into the world, and those who can must give everything to obtain it. "Leave the dead"—who know nothing of this new life—"to bury their own dead; but go thou and publish abroad the Kingdom of God." The third, like the first, offers himself, but wishes just to go and say good-bye at home. At least, we think, there can be no harm in that. Yet even that is not permitted. The man should have forgotten all about his home and family in his complete absorption in the founding of the Kingdom; "No man, having put his hand to the plough and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God."

Why is He so stern? Partly, no doubt,

because of the strain He was putting upon His own spirit. He had "steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem," and He knew what awaited Him there. He dared not be tender then. But it was also for their sakes. The time was not one for any secondary interests. The Messiah was entering His capital; the crown of glory and thorns would soon be upon the King's brow; and before that men must have settled whether they were on His side or not.

Let us consider the position of these three men in relation to ourselves. Have we ever realised that to follow Christ is to share the outcasts' life? But it is so. There is a picture, marked by manifest sincerity and conviction, more than enough to compensate for a touch of vulgarity in its composition, which represents Christ bound to an altar, while men pass by—the priest, the pleasure-seeker, the buisiness man, the mob-orator—all unheeding. It is called "Despised and Rejected of Men." But there is no need to go into picture-galleries to see the Son of Man despised and rejected; that is a sight which all can see in town and country every day. And unless the

condition of these people is on our consciences and on our nerves, we are not true followers of Christ. We shall soon be enjoying our Christmas festivities. Our minds will be going back to the time when, in the recollection of the early Church, the sky was full of shouting angels—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men." What was the occasion of it all? A poor woman had given birth to a baby—for whom there was no room in the inn. That was all. Let us take heed that it be not true of us, that while we rejoice because Christ was born, the cry is rising to the Father from the streets of our cities and the lanes of our country-side, by the lips of their Saviour and our Judge: "I am hungry and ye give Me no meat."

We turn to the second disciple. He is rebuked for no wickedness, but for allowing anything whatsoever to interfere with devotion to the first duty. Home-ties are sacred; but loyalty to God is more sacred still, and if one or the other has to be abandoned, it is home-ties that must go. And it is not impossible that you should have to choose

between them. In your fight with the flesh and the devil your friends will be on your side, eager to help. But in your fight with the world they will mostly be against you. If you are feeling yourself called to some great sacrifice, they will as a rule be urging you not to make it, partly from kindness as they understand it, partly from selfish and worldly ambitions of their own. We are bound to hope that such a problem may never arise in our own lives, but we are also bound to prepare ourselves to choose God before home if the necessity arises to choose between them at all.

The demand made of the third disciple is the hardest of all. He is not allowed even to say good-bye to his family ; he is rebuked for not having forgotten his home ; he is told that his whole mind should be absolutely filled with the thought of the work to which he is called. And no doubt here the peculiarity of the circumstances determines a good deal. It was the great crisis of the world's history, and very clear decisions were called for. For most of us obedience to God will find its channel in family affection ; but even

with us it is a good thing to ask whether we are really trying to put God first. And, after all, our own age is an age of crisis, if ever there was one. There is an opportunity before our generation of doing service to the Kingdom of God such as is not often given in the history of mankind. In all that is stirring now at home and abroad we find our opportunity. But we shall never make use of it unless we are prepared to forget everything except Christ and His cause. We may have lapses and failures; and many a time we shall need His forgiveness. That forgiveness is offered freely to those whose whole real purpose is to serve Him. But there is in the Gospel no word of consolation for the man whose allegiance is divided. There is none so tender as Christ towards those who have accepted Him as Lord. There is none so severe as Christ towards those who are still wavering and are not trying to give Him their whole hearts.

But it is just the greatness of the opportunity before us that drives us back upon our need of God. And as men feel more strongly their impotence to rise to the height of the

opportunity, they begin to rely more completely upon God.

As we look out into the future, we seem to see a vast army drawn from every nation under heaven, from every social class, strangest of all—(and, alas, that it should be strange!)—from every section of Christ's Church, all pledged to one thing and to one thing only, the establishment of Christ's Kingdom on the earth by His method of sacrifice and the application of His principle of brotherhood to every phase of life. And as they labour, there takes shape a world, much like our own, and yet how different! Still city and country life with all their manifold pursuits, but no leading into captivity and no complaining in our streets; still sorrow, but no bitterness; still failure, but no oppression; still richer and poorer, but no thoughtless luxury, no grinding destitution; still priest and people, yet both alike unitedly presenting before the eternal Father the one unceasing sacrifice of their own lives in body broken and blood outpoured; still Church and world, yet both together celebrating unintermittently the one Divine Service, which is the service of man-

kind. And in that climax of a vision which, if we are faithful, shall be prophecy, what is it that has happened? "The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our God and of His Christ."

But how are we to take our place in that triumphant host?

"If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."

VII

THE MYSTERY OF PROVIDENCE

January 22, 1911.

Psalm lxxvii. 9, 10, 19, 20.—"Hath God forgotten to be gracious: and will he shut up his loving-kindness in displeasure?

"And I said, It is mine own infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most Highest.

"Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in the great waters: and thy footsteps are not known.

"Thou leddest thy people like sheep: by the hand of Moses and Aaron."

The year that closed during our Christmas holidays was one of the most memorable that we shall see; the political conflict which marked it is bound to affect the nation's destiny, however it may terminate; the sudden lull in the storm of political controversy when the King we had learnt to trust was suddenly removed in the fulness of

his powers, was a dramatic episode equal in impressiveness to any in our history. And nearly all the events in that memorable year were of a kind to emphasise the mystery of our existence on earth.

In the last century there were giants—the great poets, Browning and Tennyson, Matthew Arnold and Clough; great scientists and philosophers of science, Faraday and Darwin, Huxley and Spencer; great writers of history, like Carlyle and Macaulay; great novelists, like Dickens and Thackeray, George Eliot and Meredith; great statesmen, like Peel and Disraeli and Gladstone. These were all great personages who towered above their generation, and dominated its thought. But we have no such heroes in the twentieth century; there are no figures standing out among us as these stood out among their contemporaries; "we see not our tokens; there is not one prophet more; not one among us is there that understandeth any more."

This universal absence of genius depresses even those who care more for the general level of attainment among the people than for isolated instances of greatness. We may feel

convinced that the turmoil we are witnessing in our social and political life will issue in something better than the state of things we know. We may feel sure in our own minds that the democratic movement of the age is rooted in a passion for justice which is the best thing in our public life just now. And yet we are anxious; for we do not know clearly in our own minds what we want, and we are not sure that our well-intentioned struggles may not do more harm than good. The people who call themselves progressive are depressed and anxious; and the people who think the present order, however faulty, better than any alternative they know are still more depressed as the forces of change continue their ceaseless operation.

But perhaps we have needed this discouragement. When we had great men with us we trusted them too much. With the great expansion of human thought and of power over nature which they gave us, we began to forget the Eternal and Almighty. The new life of men in great cities, cut apart from nature, helped in this result. The town-bred man, whose food comes to him almost

automatically and whose work is done in houses, has not the same cause for remembering the powers greater than man as one whose life is dependent on natural forces, whose labour is under the sun or the rain, and whose whole livelihood may be destroyed by a storm in harvest. And beyond doubt in the latter part of the nineteenth century men were becoming very forgetful of God.

And we are being saved, as the Psalmist was saved, by the very facts which depress us. The two great forces now acting on the conscience of Christendom are the growth in our knowledge of the circumstances of our poorer fellow-citizens and the inclusion within our habitual thought of the whole non-Christian world. And as we face this double problem so presented, we feel paralysed. For we cannot see any solution, and there are no great men to teach us. We see the need, but not the way to meet it. Our national development has been so great and so triumphant—the pattern of Europe; and it ends in an *impasse*. "Hath God forgotten to be gracious, and will He shut up His loving kindness in displeasure?"

Such a problem pressed on the writer of the 77th Psalm. It was no doubt written after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, and the Psalmist sees no trace anywhere of a goal to which he may press. He thinks of the great acts of God in the past—"I have considered the days of old and the years that are past." But now it is all so different, and there is no hope of a change; "will the Lord absent Himself for ever, and will He be no more entreated? Is His mercy clean gone for ever, and is His promise come utterly to an end for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious, and will He shut up His loving kindness in displeasure?"

"And I said, It is mine own infirmity; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most Highest." There is the solution of the problem. We grope about and calculate chances, and wonder if the time is ripe. We will not surrender ourselves to our trust in God; we will not try simply to model our characters on that of Christ and then do the things to which the Spirit so formed in us will prompt. We want to see and choose our path. But no path that we can see will lead us

where we want to go. So we are anxious and depressed.

The Psalmist went back in memory and imagination to the delivery of the Israelites from Egypt, and found in it the invariable method of the Divine deliverance—"Thou art the God that doeth wonders, and hast declared Thy power among the people. Thou hast mightily delivered Thy people, even the sons of Jacob and Joseph." But how? He led them to the shore of the Red Sea; the situation was hopeless; in front was the water, behind were the Egyptian hosts; they were bound to be recaptured. And then—"The waters saw Thee, O God, the waters saw Thee and were afraid: the depths also were troubled." The water rushed back, and where no way had existed and no trace of their march would be seen afterwards, He led them into safety. "Thy way is in the sea, and Thy paths in the great waters, and Thy footsteps are not known."

It is always so with God's guidance. It leads us by ways we never thought of to a goal we never hoped to reach. And it operates among us now quite as manifestly as

among the Jews long ago. For the most memorable event of the memorable year just passed was not either of its two general elections, nor was it the death of the King; it was the great Conference at Edinburgh, where, for the first time since the disruption of Western Christendom at the Reformation, representatives of all reformed branches of the Church were gathered to discuss the Church's primary duty of evangelising the world. It was a Conference which, in the Archbishop's words, "if men be weighed rather than counted has, I suppose, no parallel in the history of this or of other lands." Five years ago, when Mr. Birrell's Education Bill was setting the various sections of English Christianity by the ears, anyone who had prophesied the Conference of last summer would have been met with ridicule and contempt. Yet very soon after that the preparations were beginning. The men who made those preparations did not scheme or calculate; there was no reason to suppose that the moment was conspicuously opportune; they were not men of great position in the Church or the world; but they were sure that the thing ought to be

done, so they set to work and did it. We still do not know what the fruit of that Conference will be. But no one who was there has any doubt that it was one of the great landmarks in the history of the purpose of God; and those who were present at the service of intercession for the Church's Unity while there was read very slowly the seventeenth chapter of St. John's Gospel—representatives of all denominations and all nationalities praying together under the immediate leadership of Christ—were sure at least of two things; achievements greater than we can dream are in store for the Church of our generation, but they can only be granted in response to an absolute trust.

I have been speaking of very great matters. But exactly the same principles are applicable to all the affairs of our life and to our duties here. In our ordinary duties and in our thoughts of our own future career, we tend to be extraordinarily faithless. We want to know the exact consequences of our actions, and whether we shall like the result or not, before we take them. Sometimes the right thing to do is quite plain, and we hesitate timidly and

find objections. There are always objections. And then we persuade ourselves that the right action should be done, of course—only not now. But the appropriate moment never comes; and we find ourselves drifting aimlessly. The wisdom of the world makes schemes and calculations; and in its province it is most effective; but never yet has it accomplished any great achievement; indeed, it ridicules every great attempt as visionary.

To do great things we need perfect faith. We must be content to leave results in God's hands, simply doing the right thing because it is the right thing, in the moment of our conviction that it is right. In facing the great problems which confront the Church and civilisation, and quite equally in facing the problems of our own spiritual and moral growth—problems smaller in compass but no easier to solve—we must cease to demand the guidance of great leaders, we must refuse to stand wringing useless hands before the task our Father has set us; we must simply trust to Him, fashioning our purpose by the revelation of His in Jesus Christ, and obeying loyally. "There was never yet a right

endeavour but it succeeded"; the power of the Universe is on the side of right, and at last, if not at once, our trust will be rewarded.

If we are loyally obedient we shall be called visionary and fanatical. All around any servant of the Lord we see men of the world, aggressive, confident, knowing what they want and how to get it, and among them stands the man who trusts, not knowing where he is being led, not asking to choose or see his path. And they ridicule him as the man with no eyes in his head. So Isaiah saw him, and accepts the verdict of their ridicule. "Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf as my messenger that I send? Who is blind as he that is at peace with me or blind as the Lord's servant?" But he has the assurance of the promise; "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; in paths that they know not will I lead them." "A man never goes so far," said Oliver Cromwell, "as when he does not know where he is going."

But we are followers of the greatest visionary of the world. He was a carpenter in a village; and he came forward claiming

that He knew the key to the problems of the world; He proclaimed the coming of the Kingdom of God, which is the goal of all human desire and the close of human history; He grasped "the wheel of the world and set it moving on its last revolution"; before a cynical Governor, an amazed High Priest and an astonished Sanhedrin, He repeated the outrageous claim. He knew they would kill Him for it, and where would His claim be then? Yet He still made it. And all history from that day to this has been its vindication.

We walk by faith and not by sight. Let us cease to trouble about the future, leaving it in God's hands. Let us give ourselves to the contemplation of Christ, to the fashioning of our souls in His likeness, and to doing with all our might the duty that we see when our eyes are opened by our intercourse with Him. It will bring us sorrow and perplexity. We shall have to do things that we hate to do; we shall often feel that we cannot see any good fruit that is to come of our devotion, and that a darkness of blindness is upon our eyes. We are as helpless as sheep led by the shepherd. But we shall trust in God and not

be afraid. He leadeth the blind by a way that they know not; His way is in the sea and His paths in the great waters, and His footsteps are not known; but He leadeth His people as a shepherd guides his flock.

VIII

LOVE

February 26, 1911 (*Quinquagesima*).

I S. John ii. 10.—"He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him."

iii. 14.—"We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren."

"BECAUSE we love the brethren," not "because we love God." But elsewhere we read, "This is life eternal, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." For indeed love of God and love of man are inseparable. Let no one pride himself on the intensity of his emotions as he takes part in public or private worship, and suppose that those emotions are the love of God, if he is selfish in his conduct and indifferent to the state of the wicked or the unhappy. S. John brushes

aside such claims to spirituality with refreshing brevity; "If a man say 'I love God' and hateth his brother, he is a liar." For God is Love, and desires the welfare of all His children; and if we love Him, we too shall labour for what He desires: we shall labour for the welfare of all His children; the love of God must issue in love of men.

By this we may test not only the sincerity of our faith, but its own inward truth. It is quite possible to be moved by very deep feelings of devotion and affection towards the being whom we worship, and find that our feelings for our fellow men are quite unchanged. That only means that the being whom we worship is not the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, but, by whatever name we address him, is in reality some Hindu Brahma, or Mohammedan Allah, or Jewish Jehovah; it means that in our worship we have forgotten what Christ has revealed to us of God's nature, and that our worship is therefore not given to God as revealed in Christ. If we really loved the God who is made manifest in Christ, we should cherish the image of Him which is stamped on every human soul,

and should hardly need to hear the words which now startle us—" Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these My brethren ye did it unto Me." Let us test our Christian faith by this. It is Christ who is crushed by the pressure of our absurd social system ; it is Christ who suffers in the degradation of the drunkard ; if because they are cheap I buy goods made under conditions which destroy the character of those who make them, I am like Judas, for I have sold Christ for money ; if for my advantage one child is taken away from school and set to work with faculties still undeveloped, I crucify the Lord of glory.

Are we innocent or guilty ?

Let me call your attention to a peculiarity of our Lord's use of language ; once and only once does He speak of Himself as King ; and that is in this very parable of judgment where He identifies Himself with the despised and neglected ; "Then shall the King say to them on His right hand——." He pleads ; He exhorts ; He commands. But only once does He issue His decree with regal authority, and that is when He "lifts His brow luminous and

imperial from the rags" of those whom we despise as social outcasts.

The duty of love He had distinguished as His own new commandment. "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another." This was to be the distinguishing mark of the Christian. "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." It is not assent to doctrinal propositions, nor regularity of Church attendance, that proves us Christians, it is a zeal for the welfare of men, a trust in men that never despairs, a love for men that is never quenched.

"But," we say, "all this is so visionary; no doubt it does very well for devotees and fanatics; but the man who has to face the real problems of life in politics or in business must keep his head level and see things as they are; he has to employ other men for his purposes; and he must play upon their weaknesses and never trust them further than he can help." So our worldly wisdom advises; but it is wrong, even for its own purposes it is wrong. "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light"; it is he who really sees

what he is doing. And the reason is simple. The cynic, who tries to make other men pawns in his game, and uses their weaknesses for his own ends, cannot see far into men's character. But the man who loves and trusts is free from deception in the long run, because love and trust create what they believe in. We may have to wait; our love may be met with indifference and our trust with treachery. And sometimes we cannot wait for trust to create trustworthiness, because we are responsible for others besides ourselves, who may suffer through some abuse of trust. But so far as ourselves only are concerned, the path of wisdom and of duty is plain; when we are considering another man's conduct let us always attribute the best motives that will account for it; nine times out of ten the kindest judgment is the right one; and in that tenth case our trust may bring shame and amendment. No man can go on for ever betraying a trust which is constantly renewed; no man can go on for ever rejecting a love that remains unquenched by all his ingratitude. Love and trust are always sure guides to men's characters in the long run, for love and

trust create the qualities they believe in. "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light."

Of this two-sided fact which we call both love of God and love of man, it is the latter which is the more indispensable to the Christian. To realise the love of God and to love Him in return is no doubt the greatest joy possible to man. But the indispensable quality of the Christian is love of men and faith in men. To the heathen, or followers of any other religion than Christ's, it is not so; they are concerned with the salvation of their own souls, and for that faith in God is all that is required. But the Christian is not particularly exercised about the saving of his own soul; for he ought to have forgotten all about himself altogether; he hopes and labours for the redemption of mankind. And how shall he hope for this, unless he has trust in the power of all men, however mean, to respond to the highest appeal if only they hear it? Or how shall he labour for this, unless he is possessed by the love of men? And in loving men, he possesses God, and God possesses him. "God is love; and he that abideth in

love abideth in God"—and that whether he knows it or not; he may be an agnostic or an atheist, but if he has the love of men in his heart, he abideth in God.

This love of men is not what we nowadays call charity; it is not the discriminating bestowal of our superfluities on the "deserving" poor. It is something which may still be lacking though we give all our goods to feed the poor and our bodies to be burned. I recently heard an Indian clergyman make this appeal to the English missionaries in India, who, as he thought, showed some sense of condescension and superiority to the natives. "Through all the ages to come the Indian Church will rise up in gratitude to attest the heroism and self-denying labours of the missionary body. You have given your goods to feed the poor; you have given your bodies to be burned. We also ask for love. Give us friends." The love of men, by possessing which we pass from death to life, is a power that drives us out into the world to do strange things. When we feel towards all men as we now feel towards those for whom we care most, we shall begin to know what the love of men is.

And how shall we move towards that goal? Two methods I will mention. Let us see to it, when we try to frame the ideal which is to guide our own life, that the welfare of all men is included in it. Let us never think only of what we can do for our family or our friends; let us think what is the best service we can render to mankind. That is one method. And the other, which is an addition, not an alternative, is this; and it comes closer home to us here. Let us see to it that we treat all those with whom we have to do as if we cared exceedingly for their true welfare. Let us realise our responsibilities.

God has knit the whole human family together in the bond of His love; and we are called to the love of all men. But we can hardly realise this. What we realise quite easily is that all members of a school such as ours are so knit together that the influence of every individual is felt by every other.

And we must begin our training for the life of service by feeling our responsibility in this narrower field. Do not be slack about this; for if you are, you may do great damage here, and you will remain useless and futile people

all your lives. Keep the standard high. Do not allow yourselves to speak as if you admired idleness at work; for if you do, you are helping to create an atmosphere where hard work will be difficult, and even if you work hard yourself some other may slip into idleness and uselessness; and you will be responsible.

There are some people who really value their religious worship, yet speak slightingly of it, because they think that is the popular view of it; and they make it harder for others to find the value which they have found.

There are some who find themselves seriously tempted to dishonesty in work or play; and if we let ourselves speak easily of the fun of cheating and not being caught, we are making harder for them a fight that is hard enough already.

We may do great harm in the world without ever doing ourselves what we should regard as a wrong act.

Perhaps we allow ourselves to talk of indecent subjects; we think we are strong and can stop ourselves from really doing what is wrong. Our talk is partly bravado; we wish to show our independence of mind and speech,

and perhaps to be admired as dare-devils; partly perhaps—and more often than those who indulge in it are aware—it springs from a real indecency of mind. But we have never done anything; it is only talk; and we feel no guilt. Then perhaps we learn that some one we had never thought of has gone seriously wrong; and that it was our conversation which gave him the first suggestion or which broke down the last resistance of his conscience. We had never thought about him; we only talked; we did nothing—nothing, except ruin a man's life!

> "He who saws through the trunk, though he leave the tree up in the forest,
> When the first wind casts it down, is his not the hand that smote it?"

You who think you are strong-minded and self-controlled, remember the weaker brother, for whom Christ died. There is no sure way to avoid the wrecking of other people's lives, except by having nothing to do with the accursed thing. We shall never be allowed to say of another's sin to which we contributed—"it was his own fault." Have we been placing stumbling-blocks? "Whoso shall cause

one of these little ones that believe on Me to stumble, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

But our influence springs from deeper sources than those we can control; and if we are to discharge our responsibilities aright our whole characters need changing. And so we come back to the other side of the great Christian virtue. "We love because He first loved us." We may see our duty, but we can never hope to perform it except in the power of the love of God. That is the transforming agency. Let us yield ourselves to it.

O blessed Jesus, who knowest the impurity of our affection, the narrowness of our sympathy, and the coldness of our love, take possession of our souls and fill our minds with the image of Thyself; break the stubbornness of our selfish wills and mould us in the likeness of Thine unchanging love, O Thou who only canst, our Saviour, our Lord and our God.

IX

PENITENCE

March 12, 1911.

S. Matthew xi. 28, 30.—"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

"For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

v. 20.—"Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

The Scribes and Pharisees are denounced by Christ for binding upon men's shoulders burdens too heavy for them to bear; He requires that our righteousness should exceed theirs; yet He says that His yoke is easy and His burden light. It is not that the Scribes and Pharisees who imposed these burdens on others and themselves shirked them, though apparently some of them did; they were laborious, painstaking people, disciplining themselves very carefully, and practising

some self-sacrifice for their religion as they understood it.

They were good people; and their case was hopeless. They thought a great deal about the example they set and the influence they exerted. They were very zealous for propriety of conduct. They dragooned themselves and their neighbours into regular attendance at public worship and strict respectability. They were the "good Church-people" of the time. And they goaded the authorities into crucifying Christ.

The ground for their great sin and for the apparent contradiction in the two sayings of Christ that I have quoted is the same. They aimed at an external virtue. It was the doing or not doing of this or that with which they concerned themselves. They tried to live by rules and regulations. They were rules which it was hard to keep; for many people it was almost impossible. Their burdens were too heavy for men to bear. And they could not supply any new strength to men. They set up the ideal requirements of a divine law, and condemned those who failed to fulfil them. Christ upheld the require-

ments of an ideal still loftier, yet He said: "My yoke is easy and My burden is light." For indeed it is a burden which the self-centred man, however conscientious, can never lift at all, but which the unselfish man carries and scarcely feels.

At this season of penitence it is well that we should remind ourselves what is the nature of the repentance which Christ requires of us. His preaching was at first taken from S. John the Baptist's text: "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." But what is this repentance?

It begins in sorrow for sin. Until we become conscious of the great gulf between ourselves and God, the immense difference between what we are and what we might be, there will be no repentance. Sorrow for sin, so far as it is valuable, does not mean the dwelling in thought upon the wrong actions we have done; that is generally rather bad for us. When we have done a wrong act, we must face the fact and not make excuses; and then we must confess it both to God and to the person we have injured; and then we must do all we can to wipe out its con-

sequences. Unless we tell the person we have injured we had better not confess to God; for the confession will be hypocrisy. And unless we try to undo the harm we have done, our confession to either God or man is hypocrisy. If we are really sorry, we shall try to undo the harm; if we are not really sorry, we had better not say we are. Religious lies are the worst sort of lies.

Of course very often the matter is not so simple as this. We really want to confess, and undo the damage we have done, but when the time comes we dare not; we shrink from the cost. And then it is good for us, in our better moments, to use the tremendous language that the Church puts in our mouth; "We do earnestly repent and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us; the burden of them is intolerable." No doubt it is very seldom that we feel all that; but if we come to God in the right spirit, we know that we ought to feel all that; and, as members of the Church, we say what, as mere individuals, we have no right to say. I think we should make a difference between our

public confession of sin in the Church's worship, and our private confession in our own rooms. When we are alone, let us above all things be honest ; if we are not sorry, let us pray for penitence and not pretend that we have got it. When we are in Church, let us take on our lips the Church's confession, in the consciousness that this expresses what we ought to feel, even though we do not feel it.

And when we have confessed and done all that can be done to check the consequences of our wrong act, let us forget about it altogether. Perpetual brooding on our own past misdoing is unwholesome. It is liable to pollute the imagination, and to suggest that our wrong actions are all that is wrong about us. But in all of us there is an evil far deeper-seated, which reveals itself not in the wrong things which we do, but in the right things which we leave undone. With most of us, our most serious fault is not to be found in occasional lapses into wrong-doing, but in our habitual failure to live as real Christians would live. And if we only attend to our misdeeds, we are liable to become self

contented—which is the worst thing that can happen to a man.

Sorrow for sin is, after all, a very small part of repentance. It is a necessary preliminary; but still it is preliminary. The vital matter is amendment of life. As the quaint old verse admirably phrases it:—

> "It's not enough to say,
> 'I'm sorry and repent,'
> And then to go on afterwards
> Just as you always went."

What is required of us is not that we should be miserable, but that we should be good, and of some service to the world. And it is here that the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees is so liable to take possession of us. We want to make the moral life simple and straightforward. We try to find universal rules of conduct. We want to say that such and such acts are always right, while such and such other acts are always wrong. And then one of two things happens; because there are no such universal rules, we either become cynically indifferent and lax in our moral standards or else we become strait-laced and censorious. There is no need to condemn

laxity ; every serious-minded person knows that it is wrong ; and there is, I think, no record of any condemnation of it from our Lord. But priggishness and censoriousness he repeatedly condemns. In His great and revolutionary saying about the Sabbath—"The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath"—He broke up the authority of all external rules. We find the same purpose in the apocryphal story which tells us that He once found a man ploughing on the Sabbath, and said to him, "If thou knowest what thou dost, blessed are thou ; but if thou knowest not, thou art a breaker of the Law and art accurst." To break the Law in carelessness and indifference is wicked : but to break it because we deliberately judge that in the circumstances it is right to do so, is to possess the true liberty of the Christian man.

The Pharisees tried to live by rules and observances ; and when something too great for their rules was before them, they could not recognise it. They said that Christ was in league with the devil ; "by Beelzebub casteth He out devils." And we know the fierceness of repudiation with which St. Paul turned

round upon the regulations under which he had been trained, after he found the liberty which is in Christ Jesus. He even regards the observance of special days or seasons with keen suspicion; "how turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly rudiments, whereunto ye desire to be in bondage over again? Ye observe days and months and seasons and years. I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labour upon you in vain."

But the worst feature of the attempt to live by rules of conduct is not that it hardens us, but that it is totally ineffective. As long as the rules we make are those kept by the better sort of people round about us, we may succeed in keeping them; but for that we do not need any rules. A certain sensitiveness to social censure and a perception of the disadvantages of social ostracism will be enough. But if our aim is precisely to transfer our allegiance from the Prince of this world to the Kingdom of God, no amount of rules or pious resolutions will assist us. If we are to enter that Kingdom and live as its servants we must have a righteousness

higher in kind than that of the Scribes and Pharisees.

But though higher it is also easier, if we take the right way to it. For Christ supplies the power to fulfil His demand if we will only bring our lives under His influence. But we keep our religion and our lives far apart. We come to chapel and sing about sacrifice—

> "Were the whole realm of Nature mine
> That were an offering far too small";

but the offering which we actually make is far smaller; we seldom think that it may be our duty as Christians to adopt an ill-paid profession in preference to one well-paid on the simple ground that we can be of more use in it. We keep our religion and our lives far apart, but if we would bring them together, holding ourselves under the influence of Christ as we consider our ordinary secular affairs, we should find a wonderful change take place. Our very inclinations will be purified. We shall no longer need to abstain from this indulgence or to conquer that evil impulse, for the temptation itself will have ceased.

It is upon this experience that the whole of Christianity rests. Like S. Paul we try to keep the law; like S. Paul we fail; but if, like him, we will let the influence of Christ play upon our daily lives, we shall find that we no longer need to trouble about the law or any rule of conduct; for we shall do right by instinct and impulse.

"What shall I do to be saved?" said a young man once to St. Augustine; and the Saint replied "Love God; and do what you like." For if we love God, what we like will be the right thing.

This is the reason for the perfect spontaneity and simplicity of really saintly men. They do not need to guard their actions or their words; they can speak out whatever is in them, they can follow all their impulses, because their whole being is permeated by the Spirit of Christ. Very often they shock respectable people exceedingly; they speak easily of the deepest things; they adopt unconventional and even what are thought disreputable methods with a complete confidence, because they are not living in their own strength but in the strength

they have won through intercourse with Christ.

We all know some laborious persons who conscientiously fulfil their duties and live a life of conscious self-suppression and self-sacrifice, and we know others who have given up far more, who have gone to Africa or Asia to work alone for Christ, or who are wearing out their health and strength in the unceasing racket of work among men and boys in our big towns, but who tell us that this is what they enjoy and that there is no sacrifice about it. And we know that while we admire the former, we admire the latter still more; and we find them far better company. For they are not prisoners of a code of virtue: they are spontaneous and natural because in God's service they find perfect freedom. If sacrifice is complete it is unnoticed by the man who makes it. This is the ineradicable difference between the Puritan and the true Christian; the Christian is natural and spontaneous; he restrains neither tears nor laughter nor wrath; he has no rules of conduct; but he loves

his neighbour as himself and loses himself in his love of God.

But only the Saints, only Christ Himself indeed, can dare to be so utterly spontaneous and free from all restraint. We are afraid of our sorrow, because it is so often weak and selfish; we are afraid of our anger, because it is so closely akin to hate. But He had nothing to conceal; His sorrow was righteous sorrow, and He wept over Jerusalem before all the multitude; His anger was righteous anger, and He cursed the deceptive fig-tree and asked men how they expected to escape the damnation of hell.

It is this perfect spontaneity which constitutes part of the magic of His charm. But only those who are possessed by His Spirit may dare to imitate it altogether. For us some discipline is a necessity. Probably we need some special rules curbing our selfish indulgence; possibly we need to give up altogether something we care for very much—to pluck out our right eye or to cut off our right hand. Let us take the opportunity of Lent to set about this discipline, not because it is better done in Lent than at any other

time, but because if we don't do it now we probably shall not do it at all. But let us remember that all this is only preparatory. It belongs to the Old Testament; it is the Law and not the Gospel. "Elias must first come." But there is only one form of Christian discipline, and it has nothing to do with eating and drinking, or the number of our amusements and enjoyments. The only form of Christian discipline is that we should spend more time in the presence of Christ, reading of Him, praying to Him, thinking of His will for the world and for ourselves, making the picture of Him vivid to our minds.

And as this is the only form of Christian discipline, so it produces the only form of Christian penitence, which is not sorrow for this or that misdeed, but the realisation of the difference between ourselves and Christ.

When we realise that difference we are crushed; for we see how hopeless is the effort to mould ourselves in His likeness. And then, and only then, are we ready for the invitation. "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." As we allow His influence to have

free play with us, and in proportion to the completeness of our surrender, we find ourselves caught into His power, and changed in all our being ; we are then no longer struggling with our own temptations but with the whole evil of the world. We take upon ourselves that grievous yoke, and find it easy—that overwhelming burden, and find it light. For God too is bearing it and will not let it crush us.

If we try to be "good" and to keep the rules of righteousness we shall fail ; but if we see to it that the influence of Christ is stronger upon us every day, we shall become, not merely "good," but partakers of the Divine Nature, co-operators with Christ in the redemption of the world, channels of the Holy Spirit by which mankind is sanctified.

X

FAITH

April 2, 1911.

Heb. xi. 1.—"Faith is confidence in things hoped for, a testing of things not seen." (Ἔστι δὲ *πίστις* ἐλπιζομένων ὑπόστασις, *πραγμάτων* ἔλεγχος οὐ *βλεπομένων.*)

Faith is the most indispensable quality in life. We are born into a world of which, to the end of our days, we know singularly little. The more our science develops the greater becomes the mystery of our existence. As in the moral life those who have risen highest are most conscious of their weakness, so in the intellectual life, those who have thought most are most impressed by the completeness of our ignorance. We cannot live at all without putting faith in something which we can never prove to be worthy of our trust. We cannot prove that the sun will

rise to-morrow, but we confidently make plans for to-morrow and for all our future lives. We cannot prove the truth of any of our moral judgments, but we confidently approve and condemn and form our own ideals and aspirations. We cannot prove the honesty of any man, but we confidently trust people to do what they are paid to do. We cannot prove that God is loving, yet we try at least to put our lives in His hands.

It is plain at once that without some sort of faith we could not live at all. No one really tries to live entirely by his own unaided intellect. There are whole departments of life that we do not understand at all ; we have to act before we can investigate. And so we take the advice of someone whom we trust. If we are ill, we obey the doctor without asking him to prove to us that his advice is right. In countless circumstances we appeal to the expert and put our trust in him.

Clearly such faith is not opposed to reason ; rather it is faith in reason, though not in our own. And the same is true of our moral judgments. We may not be able to prove that this is right and that is wrong ; but the

wisdom of humanity has found it so, and we take the verdict of that wisdom on trust.

The difference between the religious man and the irreligious is not that one has faith while the other has none, but that their faith is set on different things. For the irreligious man, seeing is believing. He has seen the weaknesses of men, and trades upon them; he has seen the efficacy of material force, and relies on it; he has seen the power of money and makes use of it. But another man believes in the fundamental goodness of all men, and works for it; he trusts to the efficacy of sacrifice, and suffers for it; he hopes for the vindication of unworldliness, and waits for it. With him all life is guided by a confidence in things hoped for, and every act is a testing of things not seen.

Such a life is already a religion, even though the man may have no belief in God. Buddha was one of the great religious heroes of the world; and he was an atheist. The root difference between men is not to be sought in their theological opinions, but in the object of their practical trust. If a man says the Creed with complete intellectual sincerity

every day of his life, but yet thinks wealth, or comfort, or honour the one thing worth living for, that man has not the spirit of Christ. "Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His." But if a man, who cannot bring himself to confess the Deity of Christ or the existence of any God at all, lives in the trust that right must prevail at last and spends himself in the service of men, that man has the spirit of Christ. There is no paradox in this. "A man had two sons: and he came to the first and said, 'Son, go work to-day in the vineyard.' And he answered and said, 'I will not'; but afterwards he repented himself, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, 'I go, sir'; and went not." If we are to deny Christ at all, it is better to deny Him with our lips and confess Him in our lives than to deny Him in our lives while we confess Him with our lips.

This faith of men is a strange and wonderful thing. The life of faith is all experiment. There is in it no final certainty. A man's faith may so take hold of him that doubt for him becomes impossible; but he knows that he

can never give the same confidence to another; he cannot prove that his faith is right. He goes on testing the things not seen. But the blessings he receives are the answer to his faith, and never can be won by the faithless man. The faithless man says, "Give me the evidence, and I will believe": and the answer always must be, "First believe, and then you will find the evidence." *Credo ut intelligam;* I must believe if I would understand. No doubt my faith is very insecure and very imperfect until I see the reason for it all. But faith is essentially an experiment, and I must honestly carry out the experiment if I would find its result.

For the strangest and most wonderful thing about faith is that it supplies its own verification. In its early stages it is "the supreme miracle of human confidence—the casting of oneself into the abyss." Primitive man, finding himself in an unintelligible world, gives a pathetic trust to this and that supposed manifestation of the hidden Power; and gradually he learns that such trust, when guided by certain principles, is rewarded. We watch the development and purification

of this instinct of trust through the Old Testament, from the stage where it could be supposed that God's purpose might be affected because He was pleased with the smell of Noah's sacrifice, or Abraham could seriously believe that God had demanded the offer of his son in human sacrifice, down to Micah's declaration—"Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." But throughout there is a sense of incompleteness, until in Christ the trust reposed in God is absolute and complete, and for that very reason breaks out anew as perfect trust in man. Never forget that the great distinction between the Christian faith and all others is not to be sought in men's attitude to God so much as in their attitude to one another. That is the test. For the God whom Christ reveals is one whom we cannot love or trust without that love and trust flowing out to all men also.

But it is only as we trust that the reward

of trust is found. Faith supplies its own verification. There are qualities in men which they will never show us till we trust them; and for that reason the untrusting man will never see them. He demands the evidence before he trusts; and from the nature of the case it is only by trusting that he can find the evidence. Just so there are blessings which God is waiting to give those who trust Him, but only those who trust can learn what those blessings are. And there is an intercourse with God, which some have known on mountain-tops, or in presence of the vast expanse of sea and sky, or in private prayer or public worship, or in the Communion of Christ's Presence—an intercourse with God which none that has experienced it can ever dream of questioning, a power of the Spirit which alters the course of men's lives, though they may never be able to explain it to others.

"He who has felt the Spirit of the Highest,
Cannot confound nor doubt Him nor deny;
Yea, with one voice, O world, though thou deniest,
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I."

Faith is not belief; it is not chiefly an affair

of the intellect at all. It is the answer of our will to an ideal presented to us. And the ideal is presented to us in the life of Christ. Only there do we find our highest hopes and aspirations made real. By faith, as the writer to the Hebrews reminds us, all heroes have achieved their great exploits; by faith Abraham and Moses and Joshua founded the people of Israel; by faith Gideon and David and Judas Maccabæus strengthened and preserved it; by faith S. Stephen preached a spiritual Christianity which first freed the Church from Judaism; by faith S. Paul broke with the whole inspired system of Jewish ordinances; by faith Luther flung men back upon the word and power of God when they had learnt to trust in ecclesiastical magic; by faith William Wilberforce destroyed the slave trade, and Abraham Lincoln purged America of slavery; by faith David Livingstone called England to the redemption of Central Africa. All these and countless others did what their generation would have called impossible, because they had confidence in what they hoped for, and all their lives were testing things not seen. Their achievements

bear witness to the power of faith ; and they are indeed a great cloud of witnesses. But our gaze is fixed upon another, the Captain and Perfecter of faith, Jesus, ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν τῆς πίστεως—who trod the path of faith before us and trod it perfectly to the end.

Try to imagine what His faith amounted to. He was a village carpenter ; and He claimed that He was the fulfilment of all prophecy and the climax of human history. He was unlearned, and He challenged the whole system of the Divine Law. When He foretold the disciples' desertion, almost in the same breath He made the tremendous statement "I have overcome the world." When He was standing before the High Priest, deserted by His friends, derided by His enemies, the whole fabric of His new dispensation crumbling in ruin about Him, He still asserted that He was the promised Messiah, and that in that moment He was establishing His authority ; "from this moment there shall be the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God." There was nothing in outward circumstances to support

Him. His mission was a hopeless failure. Much of His ministry had been spent in retirement, now in Syro-Phœnicia, now away at the foot of Mount Lebanon, hurrying hither, and thither a fugitive from Herod's persecution. And the few whom He had chosen to be with Him, that they might catch His Spirit, had shown themselves invincibly impervious to much of what He tried to teach them. They wanted Him to restore the Kingdom to Israel, as if He had not told them how at the very outset He had faced and killed the temptation to use political methods. Two of his dearest, James and John, were capable of coming to Him almost at the last with the utterly unchristian request—"we would that Thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall ask of Thee," as if He had never given them a model of prayer from which every selfish petition is excluded. They had not learnt even enough devotion to face the arrest, the trial, and the cross. They all deserted Him; and their leader denied Him. Never was failure so disastrous; never was exposure so complete. And in the end, the sense of blank despair possessed Him also—

"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me."

He is the Captain and Perfection of faith, not because He was untroubled by doubts or perplexities, but because He confronted perplexities greater than any of us can ever know, and still held to His appointed course. We can never be quite sure that we are right; our purposes may be directed to the good of men, but when they fail we are always bound to feel that some fault or error in us is the ground of the failure. But He had seen the very purpose of God Himself, and had seen it fail. In all the stress of His storm-tossed life, He remains calm and confident, even as He slept in the boat when the storm on the lake came near to sinking it. He emerges from Gethsemane, and the prayer which He knew could not be granted, prepared for the scene before Caiaphas and Pilate. In face of the greatest crime in history, He knows that ignorance and not fundamental wickedness is its root—"Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." Even after the last cry of agonised despair He still commits Him-

self to God—"Into Thy hands I commend My spirit."

He had to face a spiritual blindness in men that rejected the open vision of truth; He had to face a world in which God's purpose had visibly failed. Yet He still trusted men and still trusted God—and because of that He is the Author of the world's salvation.

We can never be exposed to temptation so terrible as His. But I suppose that one of the most searching that can come to man is that which besets any who try in any way to uphold His Gospel among men. For nothing is so deadly as constantly to uphold ideals which one does not try to realise; it breeds self-complacency and hypocrisy before one knows it. And we are always calling people to a life we do not lead—

> "Standing afar, I summon you anigh Him,
> Lo, to the multitudes I call, and say
> 'This is my King, I preach and I deny Him,
> Christ, whom I crucify anew to-day.'"

We call men to surrender their hearts and wills to Christ, though we have never surrendered our own, because we know that

for them or for us there is neither power nor peace till that surrender has been made.

Faith in God is not the belief that He exists; it is not the determination to hold as true what careful investigation shows to be most probable. That is faith in Reason, and is a noble thing. Religious faith is the determination to follow a certain way of life—not because it must at last prevail, but because it is noble, and we would rather perish in pursuit of what is noble than be saved at the cost of becoming mean or futile. Shelley's desire to go to Hell with Plato rather than to Heaven with Paley has in it the essence of religious faith, whose nature is expressed in the exclamation "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

Let me remind you again, as I have done before, of Garibaldi's appeal to the citizens of Rome when the Republic of 1848 was surrendering to the old corrupt governments:—"I am going out from Rome; I offer neither quarters nor provisions nor wages; I offer hunger, thirst, forced marches, battles, death. Let him who loves his country in his heart and not with his lips

only follow me." And Christ's appeal is the same: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." The ideal is presented and the appeal is made; to respond is faith and to ignore is infidelity, whatever the creed we say.

And faith that is not only religious but Christian has learnt to trust in the love of the Almighty Father. That love makes stern demands; often what it bids will seem impossible; more often still it will seem outrageous. We shall see no ground for believing that what it promises will come true; we shall see no evidence of forces working towards the goal to which it points. But if we have learnt to trust in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ we shall have the strength to live by confidence in what we hope for and in the perpetual testing of forces we cannot see.

For some of you this is the last Sunday of school-life. You leave us to commence a career where you will have the ordering of your lives more completely in your own hands. In what are you going to put your trust?

In the weaknesses of men, in material force and the power of financial interest? Or in a devotion to a righteousness that you never saw, in the appeal of sacrifice which seems to plead in vain, in self-less idealism that puts to shame all worldly calculations? Whichever you believe in will seem to you to govern life. If you believe in force, you will be blind to the spiritual; but if you believe in the goodness of men and the love of God, you will see that all visible things are swayed by the hidden forces of sacrifice and self-devotion. You cannot shirk the question. If you do not answer it in the right way, it will answer itself in the wrong. It is well that you should face it now, in the place where you can scarcely forget the cloud of witnesses who testify of faith, and where you have learnt to run the race that is set before you, looking unto Jesus, the Captain and Perfection of faith.

XI

THE SEAL OF THE REVELATION

May 7, 1911.

S. Luke xvi. 31.—"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if one rise from the dead."

EASTER is the seal of the Revelation of God in Christ. If all had ended on the Cross, our hearts and consciences would still say that the Life of Christ was the noblest achievement of mankind; we should still feel that if anything be divine, it must be this. But as we turned to the actual world—the animal world where fear and hunger are the governing forces, the world of men where greed and self-interest seem to rule, the world of sordid poverty and careless wealth—we should say: "Yes; if anything is divine it must be

Christ; but it is incredible that the world we live in is governed by His Spirit. If Christ were God, these things would not happen." But the Cross was not the end. We shall gain little or nothing by careful inquiry into the actual events of the first Easter Day. The main fact is plain; the Apostles were aware of the actual presence of the living Christ among them, and because of that became the founders of the Church. He had been, in S. Paul's phrase, "declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection of the dead."

And yet even this supreme event could never be itself the basis of our religious life. If we have already felt the magic of Christ's power and charm, we accept the resurrection as clinching what we long to believe. But if we have not felt that power and charm, the miracle of Easter can create no faith worth having. It is the moral and spiritual character of Christ and His teaching to which we must first respond. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if one rise from the dead."

We can see why this should be so. Regarded logically, our religious belief is all

supposition and hypothesis. None of it can be absolutely proved. In the light of Christ's resurrection we may say that it all becomes probable; reason is for it and not against it. But an opinion of this kind is not religious faith. And even if our doctrines could be proved by such events, that would not give us what we want. Religion is not either science or philosophy; and what we require of it is not a satisfactory explanation of the world, but the change of our hearts and wills so that we may cease to like what we now like, and begin to work for what is now indifferent to us.

Christ called His teaching the Gospel—the good-news. In one saying after another He unfolded its meaning; and in all we find a complete confidence on just those points where we are full of doubt and hesitation. So He says that the one desire whose satisfaction is certain, is the desire for righteousness: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." But without the resurrection and the hope of immortality this promise is illusory; we know that this desire, which is the founda-

tion of all true religion, is never really satisfied in this life. And if our hopes have thus been raised, only to be dashed again, it were better they had never been raised at all. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," not because we endure hardship here for the sake of enjoyment hereafter (Christianity is not an affair of provident insurance), but because we have been led to hope for moral and spiritual perfection, for unfettered intercourse with God, and without the hope of immortality we know that this cannot be realised.

But first we must believe the promise and long for its fulfilment. First we must be prepared to work for righteousness, because of its own excellence, and without any regard to the issue. If we begin with the hope of rewards or success hereafter and then try to make our lives unselfish, we shall never succeed. For the hope that prompts us will be a selfish hope, and that can never prompt us to unselfishness. The Resurrection of Christ is the seal of the revelation of God given in His life; the promise of immortality is the pledge of the truth of the Christian life and

hope. But neither of these can actually give us that Christian life.

While our Lord was founding His Kingdom, men perpetually asked Him for some sign of His authority. Partly no doubt this was the mockery of cynics, who hoped to discredit Him by demanding miracles which they supposed Him powerless to perform; partly it was the sincere demand of good but unventuresome people who wanted a guarantee that in following Him they would not be wasting their lives. And He says that this demand for evidence and guarantees is a proof of spiritual worthlessness. "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of the prophet Jonah"—that is, the efficacy of the preaching. "The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, a greater than Jonah is here." No doubt it all looks like an illusion; and will look still more like an illusion. "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three

nights in the heart of the earth." It will look as if it had ended in nothing, as the mission of Jonah looked as if it had ended in nothing before it had well begun. That sign should be granted; but it would be of no use to those whose rejection of the preaching was the cause of its apparent failure.

We are always trying to shirk the responsibility which rests upon us for answering to the divine call as it comes to each of us individually. We want to set up some authority which may save us the trouble of thinking and the risk involved in answering the challenge of faith. So men have taken the Bible and called it infallible, and then put their minds to sleep; or they have set up a Church and called it infallible, and then put their minds to sleep. Or they have taken some miracle, like the Resurrection, and said that it proves their doctrine, and then put their minds to sleep. But Christ will not compel men's minds or their allegiance. He lives His life and proclaims His Kingdom; some accept Him as their Lord, and to them, and to them alone, He shews Himself after His resurrection. If He would have cast

Himself from the pinnacle of the Temple for the angels to bear Him up, all Jerusalem must have believed; if He had answered the challenge of the mocking priests, and come down from the Cross, all the crowds assembled for the Passover must have believed. But what would they have believed? Simply that He was in some way a messenger of God. They would not have thereupon obeyed His one great commandment and begun to love one another, any more than professing Christians, who call Him even divine, have begun to love one another. Belief that rests on evidence of this kind is not a foundation for the religious life.

And so He gave no sign. He only said "Come unto Me; and I will give you rest." When at the end of His ministry He challenged the authority of the chief priests by driving out of the Temple courts them that bought and sold, and they asked what was the source of His authority, He answered—It is the same as that of John the Baptist; "the Baptism of John, was it from heaven or from men?" He will give no proof, not even an assertion, of His divine commission. The

life is there; some understand, others do not; those who are still open to the influence of purity and goodness, who have the hearts of little children, not sophisticated by learned doctrines or "made stupid by education," who can still be touched by the appeal of love and respond to the demand for heroism—they accept Him as the Lord of their life, and as they try to follow Him they understand Him more and more till they know at last that He is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His Person, so that all who have seen Christ have seen the Father.

The appeal to the heart and conscience must come first—the appeal of Moses and the prophets, and of Christ, the greatest of the prophets. He is more than that; but it is only if we first learn to follow the prophet and the hero that we shall find in Him the Deity which indeed is there.

And we are not learning to follow. We and the whole Church are eager to do Him honour by bestowing on Him every title we can think of; we offer our prayers in His name; we adore Him as Creator and Redeemer of the world. The one thing that does not cross our minds

is to do what He tells us to do. There are people who are hungry; there are people who are degraded, and sinking perpetually lower for need of a helping hand; there are people who have never heard of Christ at all. And we, who believe forsoo th that God raised Him from the dead, are content that it should be so. "Why call ye Me Lord, Lord and do not the things which I say?" One is tempted to think it might be a gain if all conventional belief, and all the apparatus of the Churches in creed and in observance could be swept away, if only we might so get back the perception of what Christ was really like. But it would be no good. There was no Christian creed or observance to stand between Him and his contemporaries. What we need to get rid of is our habit of relying upon anything rather than our own perception of what is noble in our effort to avoid all danger of mistake. The man who has been drawn out of himself by the love of Christ and the purpose of God for the world which Christ proclaimed, will not stop to ask if he is making a mistake in obeying Christ's commands. A power has taken hold of him, the power of the

Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of Christ's sacrifice, and he yields himself to it not reluctantly nor barely willingly, but in the joy of devotion.

When you see something noble to be done, do it; that is the basis of religion: when you see a hero to follow, follow him; that is the basis of Christianity, Don't ask whether anyone agrees with you; don't ask whether there is anything to be gained by it. Simply follow your own perception of what is noble and heroic. This appeal to our moral and spiritual faculties must be answered first—the appeal of Moses and the prophets. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if one rise from the dead." It is perfectly true. One has risen from the dead, and we are not persuaded.

XII

WHITSUN DAY

June 4, 1911.

S. John xvi. 7.—"It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send him unto you."

Our Lord here lays down the fundamental principle of all true education. The chief duty of the teacher is to train his pupils in such a way that they may become independent of him, and be able to face the problems of life in their own strength—strength which he may have helped to develop, but which is yet altogether theirs. The teacher is perpetually tempted to forget this; he is anxious to be on intimate terms with the pupil and to be made use of to the uttermost, and it flatters a man's sense of superiority that others should be

dependent upon him. And so there is a danger that he will intensify that dependence rather than allow the relation of teacher and pupil gradually to change into that of friends standing on an equality. And in the same way the learner is apt to use his teacher too much as an easily accessible supply of information, and the indolence natural to all men thus tends to perpetuate on this side the same dependence. Yet the time must come when the two separate, and when, unless these temptations have been met, the very intimacy of the teacher with his pupil will have damaged the pupil's self-reliance and capacity for individual effort.

But our Lord goes further than this. He does not say—"The time for parting must come, and in view of it you must practise self-reliance." He says, "It is expedient for you that I go away." Even if the relation of direct dependence could last for ever it would still be undesirable. How so? How can it be anything but the greatest of all blessings to live permanently in the visible Presence of Christ? Because so long as He was there, His Spirit would never really have

possession of their hearts ; they would always be turning to Him for guidance and leading ; their virtue would not be fully their own, it would be dependent on the external Presence of the Master. We think perhaps—It was so easy then : those men who lived in the wonderful Presence, who saw the impersonal anger, the scornless pity, the Divine calm, of course they trusted Him. And we should trust Him if we could see Him as they saw Him. They were with Him as He taught and healed, they walked with Him in the cornfields and sat with Him in the boat upon the lake. They supped with Him among his friends—what could shake their devotion and fidelity? Well what did shake it? It was in the night, and there came a crowd with a flare of torches and lanterns, with swords and staves—and we read, "Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled." Their leader, S. Peter, followed, indeed, afar off—followed, afar off, to the place where he would say he did not know the Man. Later on, when Christ was no longer visibly present, these same men became the nucleus of the Church as it started its victorious career. And the reason for this change is

simple. As long as our purpose depends for its vitality on any circumstance, though that circumstance be the Son of God Himself, it may be affected by a change of circumstance. Only when a man's purpose is firmly fixed apart from any regard to any circumstances, will it be sure to stand unmoved by all chances and changes. So long as the disciples' devotion was governed by Christ visibly present in the flesh, it was unstable ; another visible presence could shake it. Only when Christ returned to dwell in them by His Spirit—only when their whole minds and wills were become moulded in the fashion of Christ's, only then was their spiritual life secure.

And we have to ask ourselves, Which stage of the spiritual life are we now in ? Is Christ for us an attractive and impressive Figure who lived in Palestine two thousand years ago, and left an ideal of religious and moral conduct which we intend if possible to follow ? or is He an abiding Presence in our hearts and wills, moulding our purpose and controlling our impulses ? Is He a mere example or an inspiring influence ? Is He for us a dead Man, or the living God ?

Or we may state the question otherwise. So far as we are trying to live the Christian life do we make that effort from a sense of duty or because we feel that we have no choice at all? Do we set ourselves to renounce certain pleasures because we think they are contrary to Christ's will, or do we find that because they are contrary to Christ's will they are repellent to us and not pleasures at all?

We all know the difference between the dutiful respect we pay to those whom we ought to admire and our spontaneous affection for those we love; between the careful unselfishness we practise to an unknown neighbour and the glad sacrifice which we rejoice to make for a real friend. Which is our attitude to Christ? Is He something outside us, standing over against us, a standard by which our life is condemned? or is He within us as a Spirit and an influence, as one's own earthly father may live within one through our love for himself and his memory?

No doubt this ideal indwelling of Christ is only realised wholly when our spiritual perfection is complete. But it is well to remember

what our ideal is and how far from it we are. That we still need external support need not trouble us; that Christ after the flesh—the historic Christ—is more to us than Christ after the Spirit—the indwelling Christ—need not trouble us. Our degree of spiritual achievement at any moment is of no consequence whatever, provided we are growing from day to day. And there is no way to win the Spiritual Power of Christ in our souls except by bringing ourselves perpetually into the presence of Christ Jesus, the Man of Nazareth, and gazing on His Life. Let us not be despondent; but above all let us not cease our efforts through supposing that our spiritual growth is finished when we are still as a fact at a stage of quite elementary education. That growth will not be complete, and we shall have no right to slacken our efforts, until it is as impossible for us to do an un-Christlike thing as it was for the Lord Christ Jesus Himself.

But what is the Christ Spirit with which we long to be filled? We know quite well—it is the spirit of love and service to the point of sacrifice. The Spirit of Christ is expressed

in the Life of Christ, in His beneficent activities, His tenderness to the wicked, His unchecked anger at the self-satisfied, His total neglect of self, His immense insistence on His mission and the Divine Kingdom He had come to found, above all in His absolute self-surrender and His ignominious Death. *That* is the Spirit we are to make our own; *that* is the kind of life from which it is to become impossible that we should diverge.

Our growth will not be complete until it is intolerable to us that anyone should be oppressed either by outward circumstance or by inward sin—until it is impossible for us to consider our own comfort or our own likes, when the will of God or the good of His children is in question. Truly for most of us, Christ is still an external standard, not an indwelling Spirit; truly for most of us it is expedient that He should go away from our outward gaze and return within us as the Comforter.

But how is this great change to be accomplished? The whole difficulty is that we do not really want to be like Christ. When the opportunity of sacrifice or service comes, we

do not feel drawn to take it by a desire to resemble Christ ; rather we feel that if that is what is meant by following Him, we would rather postpone it a little while. What is to change our selfish wills ? Only the power of the Holy Spirit Himself; but what seems so impossible for us is possible to Him.

The very essence of our Christian belief is this—that God is like Christ. When we confess the Divinity of our Lord, we mean that in His earthly Life we actually see the Character of God Himself and the Method by which He rules the world. The Spirit of Jesus which we desire to make our own is the Spirit by which the Universe is guided ; for Jesus is Divine, and His Spirit is the Spirit of God. So that when we enter on a life of sacrifice we are not, as we think at first, destroying ourselves and cutting ourselves off from the world, rather we are for the first time uniting ourselves with the whole life of the world. It is only so far as we are serving God and men that we truly *live* at all. "Whosoever willeth to save his life shall lose it ; and whosoever loseth his life for My sake shall save it." And this life of service

is not a price by which we buy a selfish enjoyment beyond the grave; it is itself the only sort of eternal life there is—"This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." The Divine Life is the Life of Christ; and our entry to the Life Divine is through sharing in the Life of Christ.

Moreover, because Christ is Divine, His Spirit is the Spirit of the Universe, and we may find Him everywhere. Not only among Christian people, but in all nature we may find the Holy Spirit. His voice speaks in the storm as well as in conscience—

> "Thunder-pealed by God to Nature, whispered in my soul to me."

But it is not only when nature is terrible that we may find in it the Holy Spirit of God. It is His breath that fans our cheeks in the cooling breeze; His is the beauty when the earth is decked with all the glory of wild flowers; and His the smile that ripples on the sea at sunset. We are always in His presence; His influence is ever about us. Let us make ourselves more conscious of it and yield ourselves to His power and His charm.

XIII

CORONATION

June 25, 1911.

Rev. xxi. 24.—"And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory into it."

THERE are few things in the world to-day which would surprise the more observant people of seventy years ago so much as the position of monarchy in our own and other lands. Then the crowns of Europe seemed all to be disappearing; the principles of the Revolution had been carried everywhere by the triumphant armies of Napoleon, and though Napoleon himself had been overcome, it was plain that his work was permanent. Metternich endeavoured to restore the old fabric of social and political life; our own monarch, George IV, took occasion, in 1822, to

inform the Tsar that he was deeply anxious for the restoration of "morality" in Europe; but it soon became clear that what was then called Revolution and is now called Democracy had come to stay. In 1848 thrones were toppling in Germany and France, and in Rome was founded a little republic under the direction of the prophet Mazzini. The great cartoon of March 7, 1863, in which *Punch* welcomed Queen Alexandra to England represents Great Britain as enjoying peace and prosperity, while all around the other nations are depicted in severe contrast; the throne of Greece is up for sale, America is torn by civil war, Poland shakes her chains impotently at Russia, France and Rome are prostrate under the despotism of Emperor and Pope, while Charles I of England is beckoning King William of Prussia to the block. Rightly or wrongly, observers at that time thought that society was sinking into chaos all over Europe; thrones and crowns were perishing; and England could not long escape the influence which was so potent on the Continent. But other signs were already visible. In 1860 Garibaldi—the very child of revolution—had

called on the people of Naples to join in consummating the great work of Italian unity under King Victor Emmanuel, the "re galantuomo," "who," he said "is the symbol of our regeneration and of the prosperity of our country." This, rather than the riots and factions which aroused fears in most observers, was the omen of the days that were coming. In January, 1871, German unity reached its fulfilment, not in the proclamation of any Republic, but in the recognition of the King of Prussia as German Emperor in the great hall at Versailles; in the two jubilees of Queen Victoria, and in the Coronation and Funeral of King Edward we have seen proof that the British Monarchy is as strong as ever in its history and that its strength is growing; and we have lately seen Norway, when organising its independent national life on strictly democratic principles, elect for the leadership of that life a hereditary royal house.

Why is it that loyalty to Kings has again become a dominant fact in the life of our time? or if the value of monarchy is so plain to us that to ask the question is unusual, why did it seem sixty or seventy

years ago as if the forces of progress would inevitably sweep monarchy away?

The progressive forces which broke loose in the French Revolution were guided by men who had little respect for nationality. They saw that in the society of their day rank and merit had no relation to each other whatsoever; and their first impulse was to abolish all inequalities and all barriers. Each individual man was to start his life free to make what he could of it; some would rise and some would sink; but none would be maintained in high position by accident of birth, or confined to a life of drudgery by the same cause. The barriers between nations were to disappear; free trade was to link all peoples together in the bonds of common interest and mutual support; and hereditary monarchy, because it stood for national distinctions and conferred power and rank without regard to character or ability, was to be swept away.

It was a very natural outlook for men who were protesting against forms of government which had long outlived the period to which they were adapted. But it bore no relation

whatsoever to the true facts of human nature. We are not isolated individuals, bound to Englishmen and Germans and Chinese in equal intimacy—the intimacy of a common humanity. We are first and foremost members of our own families and our own nations. Any culture or refinement, any moral character that any one of us possesses, has been given to us by England—not by mankind at large. Civilisation takes different forms in different countries; and in each country the individual citizen is moulded by the form it has taken in that country. And we must receive it, if at all, from England. We can set out to be cosmopolitan if we will, and there is a sense in which we are morally bound to be so; but if we try to break loose from national limitations, we shall become less, and not more, civilised and moral.

All through the last half of the last century the sense of nationality was growing. In every department of life we have been learning that the individual does not to any great extent form his own character or determine his own goal; he is a member of a body, and the life of that body he must

share. He is a member of a family, and shares its joys and sorrows, its moral prejudices and convictions, its opportunities of service to the community. This influence, if not supplemented by others, may be narrow, but it is at least something wider than the man alone could reach; to live for one's family is not a very high ideal, but to live for oneself is far lower, and somewhere or other a man must learn to sink his own interest in that of others. He can only do this by loyal membership of some group small enough for him to see what its interest is. The child cannot prefer the good of humanity to his own pleasure, for the good of humanity is a phrase without meaning to him. But the child can prefer his mother's happiness to his own pleasure, and so learn what is meant by thinking of others before self. As each narrower group comes near to finishing its task of drawing the individual out of himself it is supplemented by the influence of a wider group. The child goes to school, and there learns to care for the welfare of House or School more than for his own success, and should also learn to be loyal to

the welfare of the school before he even considers the claims of private friendship. But the narrower life of home is not abandoned. Home affection continues, and even increases, when affection for school is added to it. He goes on to the University, and the process is repeated. And the work that is done for some of us by Public School and University is done for others by their Trade Union, their Co-operative Society, their Friendly Society and the like.

All of these agencies are means of training us for membership in the Nation, in the Church, and in the Kingdom of God. We have again become conscious that alike in secular and in spiritual life we are members of a body, so that no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself, but if one member suffer all must suffer with it, or if one rejoice all rejoice with it. Historically, it is through the Oxford Movement and the High Church doctrine flowing from it, and from the Socialist movement, that we have learnt this lesson. It is not possible for the isolated individual to be redeemed, not only because it is his duty to bring others with

him to the feet of Christ, but because moral and spiritual growth are always the work of social influence, and it is only as members of some body that we can secure it; and if we are to be moulded in the very likeness of Christ Himself we must be members of a society whose vitalising power is the Spirit of Christ—we must be members of the Body of Christ.

And so too if we are to be worthy citizens of the world, we must be members of some society which will mould us for the service of men. If we are to be good men, it must be by becoming good Englishmen: there is no other way open to us. Into our national patriotism we carry our devotion to family, school, university, trade union, or whatever it may be; and the more complete our loyalty in the narrower sphere, the more effective will our patriotism be. But just as we are the children of our parents, and can never imagine ourselves except as their children, so we are in our innermost nature Englishmen. We were born members of a nation whose character has been given a very definite form by its peculiar history;

we are each of us made what we are by the heroism of Alfred, the statecraft of William the Conqueror, by the resistance to tyranny led by the Church in the persons of Becket and Langton and the Seven Bishops, by the joyous grace of the Cavaliers and the stern dutifulness of the Puritans; great events and great men have played their part in shaping every one of us; but above all other formative influences must be placed the great literature which springs from the national character and history, and then reacts again upon them—Shakespeare and Milton and Bunyan, the Book of Common Prayer, and, above all, the English Bible.

And as the sense of membership in the great body of the nation has grown more definite, men have felt the need to express it in some common action, and to set a new value on all the institutions which stand for national unity and bind the nations together in one—and among these the monarchy is chief. The sense of our common dependence upon God gathers us together for public worship in the Church; there, by sharing in some common act of ritual or supplication,

we revive and intensify our sense of our dependence upon God. And just in the same way, the sense that all are members of one body, sharing in one national life, gathers us together that we may do honour to the body whose members we are in the person of its representative, the King. The principle of Incarnation finds application here. It is not a man whom we honour at this time; it is the representative of national authority; it is not specially George V, but the King, the living symbol of a living nation.

The significance of the King is not primarily either constitutional or social, though he is constitutionally convenient and socially influential. The significance of the King is spiritual and mystical. We all need to express what we feel strongly, and by expressing it we come to feel it still more strongly. We feel a deep devotion to our country, and we want to feel it more; so we need to express it in some action. Just as it is good for our religious life that we should express in common worship our devotion to God, so it is good for our citizenship that we should express in common pageant our devo-

tion to the country. And only a hereditary monarch can become the centre of such expression of national devotion; for an elected monarch, whatever be his title, can only really represent a section of the people. The King, whose position is his by birth, can stand for the whole nation when the citizens desire to express their devotion to the nation.

Here we have the reason for the survival of Kingship. When Kings interpreted their right to represent the nation as meaning that their personal will must be taken as the nation's will, they brought themselves into conflict with the forces of democracy. But the genius of Queen Victoria transformed the conception of monarchy in England and in the minds of all who were closely watching England. She never imposed her will on the nation; but she stood as the symbol of the national life whenever such symbol was needed. And as the sense of corporate life developed throughout the latter half of her reign, men's thoughts and feelings turned to her more and more as the true representative of the England that they loved, so that at last, as Lord Rosebery said of her, "she became almost a legendary

figure even in her own lifetime." Under her successor the process still continued, and at the time of King Edward's funeral many of us had come to realise that Patriotism is as a religion, and the King is as a sacrament in that religion, the outward and visible sign of a national life which is inward and spiritual.

But it is above all things important that our thoughts should not stop there. As we carry our affection for family or school into our devotion to the country, so we must carry our patriotism forward into devotion to God and service of mankind. It is always natural that our affection for the narrower group should be more intense than for the wider, because we feel our dependence upon it more acutely and comprehend its interest more perfectly. When we come to patriotism, many of us have hardly any conception of national well-being for which we may labour except a commercial, or even it may be a military, superiority to other nations. And for humanity as a whole most of us have no devotion at all, because we are conscious of no definite membership in it, and cannot imagine its interest. But the rule which should guide

us is plain. If I am to serve mankind, it must be by serving England. But I am not at liberty to serve England in any way which involves loss to mankind. If, for example, the Empire could be extended at the cost of wiping out some small State which had a peculiar civilisation of its own, and therefore some peculiar contribution which it alone could make to the life of humanity, such extension of the Empire would be criminal and sinful. Our wider citizenship in the Kingdom of God must act as a perpetual check on our national patriotism; or, rather, must act as the inspiration of our patriotism.

For if we are genuinely members of the Kingdom of God which Christ came on earth to found, we can never believe that to assist our nation in self-aggrandisement is any kind of service to it. In that Kingdom the one demand is for service, and the one reward that is offered is the perfect will to make the sacrifice required for service. In that Kingdom the throne is a Cross and the crown is made of thorns. That Kingdom includes all men of all nations, and all are to bring their own contribution to the wealth of

its life. As our civilisation is the work of Palestine, Greece, and Rome, each bringing its peculiar treasures, spiritual devotion, intellectual passion, and social order, so the perfected Kingdom of God will be built up by the inclusion of all that the different nations can offer.

As at this Coronation season we renew and intensify our devotion to our nation, and to our nation's representative, the King, let us resolve that our patriotic service shall be that we make our nation so far as in us lies strong and temperate and pure and just, free from all tyranny of power or passion, binding together in common loyalty and real brotherhood all citizens of all classes under the uniting protection of the throne, dedicated with complete devotion to the high service of God and of mankind. So shall we fear God while we honour the King; so shall we hasten the coming of the day when all nations shall walk in the light of the Holy City, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it.

XIV

COMMEMORATION

July 2, 1911.

S. Matthew, xiii. 52.—"Every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."

THE scribes were the teachers of the old Law; it was their business to have ready, whenever the practical emergencies of life required them, all the maxims and rules and ordinances and traditions which had grown up in the long history of Israel. They were the repositories of the sacred past. But a new fact had come into the world; Christ had come proclaiming the Kingdom of God. If they shut their eyes to the new revelation, their devotion to the past would not save them. We remember how their name recurs

time after time in the phrase, "Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites." Their hypocrisy consisted precisely in this, that, with all their knowledge of the history of Israel and of the Law to which that history had given birth, they were blind to the requirements of the present and the hope of the future. They were not for the most part deliberate deceivers of men. It is not only desire for admiration that is denounced in them, but also spiritual incapacity. "Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?" For their hypocrisy lay deeper than any mere pose or acting; it consisted in the vitiated mind which cannot see what is before it, as a faulty mirror cannot give a true reflection. They had before them the revelation of God; and they said He was gluttonous and a wine bibber and in league with the Devil. "By the prince of the devils casteth He out devils." They were perfectly sincere in this judgment; and the completeness of their sincerity is the measure of their spiritual blindness and deadness. They were entirely locked up in their past, and only desired to

be allowed to do for ever as they were in the habit of doing. But some there were among them who, keeping their hold upon the history and tradition of the past, could still welcome new truth as it dawned, scribes instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, and able to bring forth out of their treasure things both new and old.

We are to-day commemorating our Founder and Benefactors; we are looking back with pride over our own history. Are we content to rejoice in that history, or are we trying to draw from it the inspiration which will lead us to face with open minds and steady wills the tasks and problems of our own generation? If we are really faithful to the great past, it is the future rather than the past to which our minds are directed. For which are the great periods in that past for which we value it? Are they the periods when men gazed backwards and plumed themselves on the achievements of their ancestors and predecessors? Or are they the periods when men looked forward, and grappled new problems, initiating experiments that might prove failures, risking themselves and all they

valued in heroic enterprise? If it is these, and not the sluggards, who have made our past precious to us, our duty is not only to commemorate them and grow sentimental about their excellencies, but to imitate their spirit by listening to hear the call of duty in our own day, by opening our minds to receive and understand the new conceptions that are to shape men's actions, by bracing our wills to make the new efforts and sacrifices that are required of us.

The history and traditions of English education are unique; there is no real parallel to its peculiar institutions of Public Schools and Collegiate Universities. And, throughout our history, its chief peculiarity has been its vital relation to the general social life of the country. If we look back at mediæval England we find the so-called upper classes for the most part quite uninterested in matters intellectual: (the stage, in which one pays a professional jester to make jokes for one, is not intellectually advanced); we find the posts for which intellectual gifts are required mainly filled by ecclesiastics; and as a consequence education

both in schools and Universities remained in the hands of the Church, which sought out clever children among the poorer classes and educated them almost, and often entirely, free of charge. At the Renaissance the desire for knowledge began to possess the wealthier classes, and we find colleges beginning to admit Commoners to share with their scholars the advantages of University training. Gradually the great middle class rose to power and influence, and we see the universities more and more adapting themselves to middle-class requirements. All through our history, the great educational institutions have stood in vital relation to the needs and life of the country.

And all through our history, the great educational institutions have been leavened by the influence of the Person and Teaching of Christ. It is impossible to estimate the extent to which this influence has affected our lives; some would say it was very little, because they seldom cared for any particular service, or gained anything from any particular sermon; yet more of us would say that it is very great, because we feel that

when we would commemorate our school's history, it must be done in the Chapel, and because the Chapel is the place which we are keenest to revisit when we go back to our old school. For even if our thoughts are often wandering while we attend the service here, even if we sometimes think it is tiresome to have to come at all, yet we are bound to be influenced by the recurrence day by day of the quiet time set apart for God and for remembering the stern demand for service and sacrifice which His Love unceasingly makes upon us.

And if we, as members of a great and ancient school, are to be worthy of our inheritance, we must be eager to find out what are the needs of our time which we should be fitting ourselves to meet. And when we look, we are staggered at what we see. For the whole world just now is plastic ; all Asia is in a state of change, disturbance, and unrest ; old beliefs and sanctions are going down before the advance of Western science ; old habits of thought and conduct have lost their binding force ; institutions that have stood for centuries are removed with incredible de-

cisiveness; we see the process in India, in China, in Japan. Africa is in a state of transformation, as Mohammedanism extends its sway with rapid advance and determined policy. All the non-Christian world just now is plastic; and the opportunity which thus confronts the Church is so vast as to be overpowering. We have to decide within the next two generations whether the dominating influence in the remodelling of those civilisations is to be the Spirit of Christ or some other; in fifty years' time the door that is now wide open will be closing, and the course of the new civilisation's development will be fixed. The need of the world and the whole tradition of the School unite to press on each individual among us the question—"Are you going to be a foreign missionary? And if not, why not?" We have to clear out of our minds once and for all the notion that Foreign Missions are a bye-subject, in which a few enthusiasts may take an interest if they please. The man who values his Christian faith for himself, and does not care to pass it on to others, is, as Bishop Talbot said at Edinburgh, "a fraudulent and embezzling

trustee." He is spending on himself a treasure that he holds in trust for others. The evangelisation of the world is the primary duty of the Church and of every individual Christian.

And the responsibility remains even if we are quite certain, as many of us will be, that we are definitely called to work at home. Every man who takes care that his private and professional life are alike governed by the Spirit of Christ is doing more for the extension of the Kingdom of God than can ever be done by preaching words. The true ambassador of Christendom to the unconverted lands is the civil servant, the trader, or the soldier who lives a Christian life before their eyes. Every white man who goes to India or Central Africa is taken as a representative of Christianity; and rightly so, for his character is the measure of the success or failure of the Church at home. We can never evangelise the world till our own life, personal and public, is governed by the Gospel.

But what would be the inevitable verdict of any dispassionate observer who first studied the way of life set forth in the New Testament

and then compared it with the life of England? Amid that conflict of private ambitions, that warring of party against party and class against class, which constitute the most prominent features of our public life, how far could he say that so-called Christian England was seeking the blessings promised in the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; blessed are the meek; blessed are the peacemakers"?

One great mark of the last ten or fifteen years has been the immense development of religious interest and conviction, especially among the men of our universities. And beyond all doubt the chief influence forcing upon men their need of Divine help has been the fresh understanding of the immense task before our civilisation. All over the world, and not least at home, problems are pressing in upon us which not the most presumptuous would claim the ability to solve by his own wits. The problem of our own poor, the problem of social readjustment by which alone, as it seems, unemployment and destitution can be remedied, the problem of our responsibility for the honour of Christ before

a hostile or indifferent world—these force us back on prayer and faith, for assuredly no man nor group of men possesses the knowledge or wisdom to handle them aright.

For it is knowledge and wisdom that are needed; there is good-will in plenty; though unquestionably there is not that readiness for real self-sacrifice by which Christ founded His Kingdom upon earth and by which alone it can be extended. But if knowledge and wisdom are our chief needs, the responsibility which rests upon our schools and universities is evident and weighty, and especially the responsibilities of those who have such a history and tradition as we commemorate to-day. Our old schools and universities have followed the life of the nation hitherto, supplying its varying needs; the marvellous structure of English education has shown wonderful adaptability in the past, and now it is again asked whether it can still discharge its great function.

For it is a marvellous structure; with all its faults of amateurishness in method and narrowness in social sympathy, it still provides men of greater general faculty and completer

public spirit than any other known system. One spirit breathes through the whole of it; and it fitly culminates in the two great Universities, the eyes of England through which she gazes on the truth, where more than anywhere else in Europe the great past is alive, with its stirring movements, splendid achievements, noble failures :—Cambridge, the home of the exact sciences, where more than elsewhere in England men learn to weigh evidence precisely and study facts minutely, the home too of the great isolated men of genius, Milton, and Newton, and Wordsworth; and Oxford—"steeped in sentiment as she lies," writes Matthew Arnold, "spreading her gardens to the moonlight, and whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the middle-age," where men study history philosophically and philosophy historically, learning to take wide surveys, to see great visions, and to follow great ideals, so that the man of genius is immediately surrounded and almost lost in the crowd of his followers, Wyclif and Wesley and Newman and Green. Our age requires that from these and from the great schools which nourish them and breathe their

spirit a new influence should go forth, refreshing, irresistible, enlightening—like the breeze, like the tide, like the sunlight—through England, and from England through the world.

"Bring me my Bow of burning Gold!
Bring me my Arrows of Desire!
Bring me my Spear? O clouds, unfold!
Bring me my Chariot of Fire!

"I will not cease from mental Fight
Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land!"

One armoury contains the Bow, the Arrows, the Spear and the Sword, and it is that parallel development of character and intellect which alone deserves the great name of Education.

To-day we look back to our past and forward to the future. Faithful to our past, and indeed because of that fidelity, we open our eyes and ears to learn what are the new tasks awaiting us and the new ideas by which we must be guided in discharging them, that we may bring forth out of our treasure things new and old. And all the treasure, new and

old alike, we lay at the feet of the Divine Master, whose Love, in its exacting demand and unfailing inspiration is the only motive that can sustain us in the work to which He calls.

XV

UNION IN DUTY

July 30, 1911.

Galatians vi. 2.—"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

5.—"Each man shall bear his own burden."

One of our great difficulties in either understanding or obeying the commands of our Lord and His Apostles arises from the fact that their words come fresh from a vivid realisation of God and His power over men's lives which has no parallel in our experience. The earliest followers of Christ found themselves carried along by the Spirit of His Life, and in their common devotion to His Will were knit together with each other in fellowship so close that each felt the throb of the common life while each knew that some part of

the work of Christ was entrusted to him and to him alone.

So it comes about that expressions which were natural and intelligible to them often seem remote and even self-contradictory to us. "Bear ye one another's burdens"; "each man shall bear his own burden." We habitually think of men as trudging along the path of life, some conscientiously, some lazily, each with his own burden of duty or anxiety; some form little groups or companies—most of which are rather short-lived, for friendship is very tender, and our selfishness destroys one after another; some go plodding on alone or only with companions who join them but for a moment. Each bears his own burden, except when some one of peculiar sympathy sees that it is too heavy for him, that poverty or sickness is utterly crushing his spirit, and transfers the burden to his own back. So we picture life; and we feel that if the burden is borne by one, some other is relieved of it. For we think of our lives as if they were quite separate from the lives of other people; we have our own little selfish ambitions and we find that they bring us into conflict with others, and it costs

us an effort to give up our pretty little schemes when we find that the welfare of our neighbours requires it.

All this shows how far we are from possessing or from being possessed by the Spirit of Christ. To S. Paul human life presented quite a different appearance. In the inspiration of Christ he saw that we are not isolated atoms, jostling against each other at haphazard, but members of one Body, whose welfare depends on the welfare of the whole Body.

And if our School is in any real sense a Christian school, we are learning this lesson here. No one of us who pauses to think for a single moment can suppose that anything could be good for him if it were bad for the School. It is perfectly plain that our interests here are altogether dependent on the welfare of our House and School. We are sent here in order that under the influences and traditions which we find we may grow into a manhood that is strong and pure and generous; and, when we let ourselves think calmly, that is what we all desire; but if so, then the most important thing for us individually is that the

high tone of those influences and traditions should be maintained; no advantage to ourselves in the pleasure of the moment or the winning of distinction, can possibly be good even for the boy who secures it, if it has been won by any neglect of duty, any subordination of work to games, any slackness or lack of vigilance in matters of purity or honour. We know this perfectly well; the life of the school is more important to us than our own lives; there is no conflict of interests, for its interest is ours. We all know it, and most of us feel it; if we are told that by our conduct we have injured the school, we feel at once that no enjoyment or advantage can make up for that; if we have injured the school we have acted against the strongest purpose of our lives.

In whatever degree this may be true of us, we have learnt the great secret of life—that there is only one welfare of men, only one satisfaction of human needs, only one true goal of all endeavour. If we find our ambitions bring us into conflict with others, that proves that our ambitions are false and that to achieve what we are aiming at would be merely dis-

appointment. God has called us to a life where each has his burden to bear, but it is just his share of a common burden, so that in doing his part loyally he is bearing the burden of others. If a group of men are carrying some heavy load, each has his own share of work to do, and if any is shirking the rest must work harder; but the more any exerts himself the lighter is the labour for the others. "Bear ye one another's burdens: each man must bear his own burden."

I say we have learnt this so far as our life here is concerned. But unless Repton boys can apply this lesson in after life, the school has failed. Will you, or will you not, as you go out from here realise that you are engaged in a common task with your own subordinates —with the clerks in your office and the servants in your house? Will you, or will you not, feel that there is one welfare of England which includes the welfare of all classes, and direct your public action as a voter and a taxpayer to the securing of that welfare? Will you, or will you not, live in the faith that there is one Purpose of God for all mankind, in whose fulfilment alone we

can find peace for our souls? Will you, or will you not, bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ?

But there is a special application of all this which I would especially insist upon to-day. The end of a school summer term is always, in one way, a sad time. Year by year at this time those who have taken the lead in our school life pass on and leave us; to them it is one of the most solemn periods that come to men; it is the close of a chapter in life, and it is the first of such chapter-endings whose meaning we appreciate at all. When we first go to school, or when we leave our preparatory school, a chapter closes: but we are not then old enough to see what it means. This is the first great change which we really appreciate. It is a time to look back and forwards. And most of you who leave us now are able, I know, to soften the sadness of departure by the knowledge that upon the whole you have done your duty as you saw it, and the school has suffered no injury through you. At such a time men do not congratulate themselves or desire compliments from others. We know that what we receive from the school is more

than we can ever give to it, and though individuals may thank us, yet, whatever our services may have been and however painful the duties we have conscientiously performed, still it is we who have to thank the school and not the school which should thank us. And you, whose time here is closing, will not wish that in the school chapel any words of praise should be spoken. You will wish, with some penitence and with abundant thankfulness, to offer the fruit of your time here—strength of body and mind, quickened imagination, and disciplined intelligence—for the service of Christ and mankind.

And as you thus dedicate your powers, you make your departure from the school a mere accident of time and place. The work of Christ is one throughout the world ; if we are faithfully doing our part here and you in the various activities to which you go, we are all fellow-labourers. And, believe me, this is more than a pious phrase. Men who are working for a common end find themselves sustained by the knowledge that others, too, are working for it, and find that the one work binds them together in growing friend-

ship even though they seldom meet. And still more do men who are serving the one Master find that in their service they are bound to one another. This is one of the differences between Religion and Duty. If we are always conscientious and do our duty bravely we shall know that we are easing the burden of others and that they are linked to us by the common task. But far more vital is the sense which comes to the true Christian; he labours, it may be, in almost complete solitude in some outpost of the Church or the Empire; or else, it may be, amongst a crowd of cynics or opponents, who thwart all his best endeavours; but his mind may travel to friends whom he knew at school and with whom he had learnt to love the Divine Master, and he may say, "This one or that whom I knew then still cares most for the same things which are most to me; he, too, lives for the Lord Jesus; his heart is stirred by what stirs mine, and his will is fixed on the goal that I seek." And so the fellowship of those who have worked and played together here, and here have learnt together that men are brothers because God is

their Father, is not interrupted because they scatter; there must be sorrows and regrets at parting, but they know that they are bearing one another's burdens.

And we who return shall derive help not only from the memory of what you have been to us and to the school, but from the knowledge that its honour is safe in your hands, that you, too, are bearing part of the burden which is ours, that you with us are standing before the One Master in affectionate devotion and frequent intercession.

Thankfulness should be the chief factor in our worship to-day. The school year which is closing has been one of the best in the school's history; we render thanks for the blessing of the past and turn with confident prayer to the future:—

> "For the harvest of bygone ages,
> In the hope of the coming days,
> Go into His gates with thankfulness
> And into His courts with praise."

We send you out into the new walks of life that are to be yours; we see you, like some band of travellers, who have spent a little while in a peaceful spot, sheltered from

storm and turmoil, now setting forth upon their journey by the way that leads to the uplands where shelter is scanty and men must make their way forwards by their own force and determination. But just now those uplands are bright with the sunshine of hope, and as you pass on towards them we turn with some sorrow but with far deeper happiness to train on those whom with equal hopefulness, God willing, we shall send out to follow you on the same path.

But it is not of ourselves that we are thinking now, or even of our work; it is of you, the friends who are leaving us. Unto God's gracious care and protection we commit you; the Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His Face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon you and give you His peace, now and for evermore.

XVI

UNITY AND PEACE

October 1, 1911.

Galatians, v. 19, 22.—"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these . . . . enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions. . . . But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace."

Ephesians, ii. 14, 15.—"For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle-wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity."

Most of us, I expect, were a good deal startled during the holidays by the manifestation of unrest and discontent among those of our fellow-citizens who work for wages; we had been content to ignore the long history which was surely and inevitably leading up to that crisis; but when our own personal convenience seemed likely to be affected by the strike on the railways we suddenly awoke to the fact that all is not well with our national life. There can

be no doubt that the country has had a fright. We are not here concerned with the matter in dispute; but as people engaged in the effort to understand the world, so that we may spend our lives in it most serviceably, we are very much concerned with the fact that such a dispute has arisen and has forced itself upon our notice. Such an occurrence is a direct call from God to every educated man to consider his duty and responsibility afresh. Merely to take one side or the other according as the general habit of our mind or the custom of our friends may suggest, is to shirk responsibility. We are not called upon to decide who is right or who is wrong; our duty is something much less habitual—our duty is to think.

And above all our duty is to think out the relation of our religious belief to such occurrences as this. And that relation is singularly close. S. Paul is quite clear that strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions are the works of the flesh, of that part of our nature which resists the Holy Spirit, whereas the fruits of the Spirit are love and joy and peace. If this is true, the only real solution

for our social and industrial chaos is to be found in the power of God's Holy Spirit. But that is the last source to which most of us would apply for guidance.

I want to impress upon you if I can that the troubles we have been witnessing are not only a challenge to our faith for the future but are a proof of the hollowness of our religion in the past. If the spirit of Christ were in our nation, the fruits of the Spirit, which are love and joy and peace, would mark our national life. But it is now marked by strife, jealousies, wraths, factions and divisions, which spring from the selfish side of man's nature, from all in us that is opposite to the Divine.

The bitterness of class-feeling, and the oppression which still undoubtedly exists, do not spring from the peculiar wickedness of separate individuals or groups of individuals. They are the inevitable result of our lack of true Christianity. If you take a large number of people, with varying abilities, but not very varying selfishness, and put them to live together for several generations, the result will be the accumulation of wealth in com-

paratively few hands, and consequently oppression, neither deliberate nor even conscious, of the great majority. There are some who say that our social problem is entirely due to the conditions in which the poor are compelled to live; and that, no doubt, is more true than to put it all down to weakness of character in the poor themselves, for that weakness, where it exists, is produced by those conditions. But if we want to go to the root of the matter we must go further than this. What we call the social problem—which means class-hatred, oppression, ignorance and vice—exists really because people generally are as good as we are and no better. The first effect of the recent disturbances upon us ought to be a shock to our self-complacency. The sort of character that we have been content with is the sort of character that issues in enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions—with all their inevitable consequence of hunger and distress for the poor.

But we have the solution in our own hands. When S. Paul set out to review the function of the Church in the Purpose of God, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, he laid it down as

the Church's great task that it should create unity among men. There was in the world of his experience one great division, the division between Jew and Gentile, symbolised by the wall of partition which marked the inner boundary of the Court of the Gentiles in the Jewish Temple, and which bore the inscription—"If any man of another race passes this boundary, he has only himself to thank if his death ensues." S. Paul saw that this great division had become quite unimportant. It was inconceivable that the Love of God, as Jesus understood it, should be limited to a single race. The manifestation of the Love of God which He had given had broken down the middle wall of partition.

But He has done more than this; He has "abolished enmity in His flesh." What does this mean?

There is no way by which we may be sure of bringing men into harmony with one another except by bringing both into allegiance to the will of God. The Purpose of God includes the welfare of all, and nothing else does that; and therefore it is only in obedience to that Purpose that we all find ourselves

united and harmonious. And we are won to that allegiance because the appeal of the Love of God is irresistible when once we understand it. As we make our intercourse with God and Christ more constant and sincere, we find ourselves taken hold of by a power stronger than our passions; as the image of the Cross fastens on our minds we are conquered by the appeal of God's self-sacrifice.

Do you think it is fantastic to appeal to the Crucifixion of Christ as the solution of our labour troubles or of the railway strike? Then read the story of Bishop Westcott's intervention in the Durham coal strike. He knew little of the points in dispute. But he invited the two Committees of Masters and Men to Bishop Auckland, and urged upon each the necessity of seeing the matter from the other's point of view; and all the time when he was not with them he was praying in the Chapel. A settlement was reached and the settlement proved sound.

The responsibility for our social troubles lies very near ourselves. We cannot escape it. Let me remind you of a few perfectly familiar facts. While you are here, passing

by slow stages from childhood to manhood, with gradually increasing freedom and responsibility, most of your fellow-citizens of the same age are out in the world, already at work to earn their living. Naturally they tend to take up whatever work is best paid at the moment, and as a rule that is work of a kind that gives no real training, so that when they reach manhood and need a man's wage they are turned out upon the streets knowing no useful trade; and so they drift into the casual labour market, picking up jobs as best they may, always the first to be out of work in times of depression—and we grumble because they are liable to be led astray by any noisy demagogue. But it is all our fault. We have allowed them to be taken away from school while their faculties are still undeveloped, before they have had the training which enables men to distinguish sense from nonsense. I was in Glasgow some time back when there was much unemployment on the Clyde, and there was a little rioting. A worthy lady said to me one day—"Of course those people who riot are not the real unemployed, they are only the unemployables."

Only unemployable! And by whose fault are they unemployable?

Again, we all know the havoc that is wrought by strong drink; and yet we are content that the great majority of our fellow-citizens should have no opportunity for the social recreation and merriment which are the birth-right of all God's children, except where the influence of alcohol is supreme. Why are not other places provided? I suppose because it would cost money. And are we going to withhold so far as we can salvation from all these for fear of spending a little money, and then have the impertinent audacity to claim our own redemption by the Cross of Christ?

Or, once more, we may remember that there are women employed at such low wages that, human nature being what it is, some of them are quite certain to eke out their livelihood at the cost of their honour. And the goods so made enter in the open market into competition with other goods and lower prices. So it is literally true that every shilling I possess buys more because of that traffic in sin. We are told to use only clean money; but the purchasing power of all money is

tainted. We must use the cleanest money we can find, and we must at least earn our money in a clean way. But we cannot use only clean money ; there is no clean money.

The responsibility comes right home. And we know that all this horror arises simply because men generally are as good as we are and no better. No one ever deliberately planned the state of society which now exists in England. The criminal capable of that has not yet been born. It is the working out of just our own character — our own selfishness and contempt for humility, our own un-Christ-likeness.

Shall we not begin then here and now to train ourselves in that obedience to Christ which is the one great need of our time and nation ? Here it is comparatively easy. There is much to remind us of God ; the problems are simple and the opportunities are fairly clear. Form here the habit of judging your conduct and—still more important—your standards in the light of your knowledge of Christ, and then you will go out into the world able to do your share in healing its wounds, possessed of the one secret of social prosperity and peace.

XVII

S. PETER AND JUDAS

October 22, 1911.

S. John, xiii. 27.—"And after the sop, then entered Satan into him. Jesus therefore saith unto him, That thou doest, do quickly."

xiii. 38; xiv. 1.—"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow until thou hast denied me thrice. Let not your heart be troubled; trust God; and trust me."

THERE are two ways of failing in loyalty; one is through real hostility, the other is through mere weakness. Judas Iscariot and S. Peter represent the two types at the crisis of their Master's life.

Judas Iscariot was the only one of the Twelve who came from the old sacred places of Judah. He would therefore, perhaps, be more quick to resent deviations from the expected behaviour of the Messiah in the

Master whom he had hailed by that title. He would also be probably more influenced by the older political conception of the Messiah, and less by the apocalyptic. In any case the first sign of recorded opposition comes just when our Lord has disappointed the hopes of those who wished to make Him King. It is in the sixth chapter of S. John. The feeding of the five thousand had immensely excited the people, and we read that "Jesus, perceiving that they were about to come and take Him by force, to make Him King, withdrew again into the mountain Himself alone."

The next day He delivered the Bread of Life discourse. And we read that many of His disciples, when they heard it, said: "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" And the result was that "many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him." He had deliberately damped down the popular enthusiasm; He had flung away His great chance. Even the Twelve were wavering: "Would ye also go away?" But with one of his outbursts of loyalty S. Peter rallied them: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou

hast the words of eternal life." But there was one there who was unaffected by S. Peter's fervour. He has just seen all his hopes in Christ dashed to pieces by Christ Himself. And the Master feels His silent opposition. "Did not I choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?"

When our Lord's course brought Him into direct conflict with the religious authorities, and to a cynical eye the inevitable issue was clear, Judas' mind is made up. He arranges the betrayal. Our Lord is conscious of what is in His mind; and before he acts, the opportunity must be secured for the institution of the Eucharist and the long intimate talk with the faithful Apostles. So Christ makes His arrangements secretly, and directs the disciples who are to prepare the Last Supper in a kind of cypher. Judas must not hear the name of the house where it is to take place. They are to follow a man with a pitcher—a rare sight in the East, for women drew the water—who will be posted at the city gate.

At the Supper itself one last appeal to loyalty is made; Judas is honoured with the

first sop, the sign of peculiar friendship. S. John, lying beside our Lord, sees the passion of hostility in Judas' face as he receives it; "after the sop, then entered Satan into him." The Lord sees at once that His appeal has failed: "That thou doest, do quickly."

One word from Christ could have prevented his going. There were two swords in the room, as we know. And even without the use of them, a word to Peter and the rest would have sufficed to bind the traitor there. But the word is not spoken. The traitor is allowed to go on with his treachery. No words could express a more absolute rejection than those of Christ: "That thou doest, do quickly."

Contrast with this the great failure of S. Peter and the treatment it received. He had rallied the wavering faith of the disciples in one crisis, as we have seen. In another it was he who leapt to the conviction that his Master was no less than the Messiah. He, too, was unwilling to believe that His Messiahship was to be realised through the Passion. "That be far from Thee, Lord." But his

devotion was always unshaken at its root; his failures were relatively superficial.

But they were enough to prevent a perfect discipleship at the moment. "Whither I go thou canst not follow Me now, but thou shalt follow afterwards." That absolute self-sacrifice, which is the Presence of God, was inaccessible to S. Peter as yet; but he should reach it some day. And later on, when the example of the Master's sacrifice was already there to nerve him, Christ foretells His martyrdom, and adds the command to do what is now—at the Last Supper—pronounced impossible. "Now this He spake signifying by what manner of death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this He saith unto him, Follow Me."

But that was later. At present S. Peter is still beset by weaknesses. He could fight, as he began to fight, against great odds for the Master he loved; he was ready to die for Him. But his trial did not come that way. He was alone among a mocking crowd; action was an impossibility; he had to stand still and be loyal; and it was cold. "I know not this man of whom ye speak."

Christ knew his friend ; he knew his weakness but also his fundamental loyalty. "Wilt thou lay down thy life for Me? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow till thou hast denied Me thrice." And then, in answer to the look of consternation on the disciples' faces: "Let not your heart be troubled; trust God; and trust Me."

In which way are we faithless? For we know that we fail in loyalty at times. Is our failure due to a real dislike of Christ and the life he requires? That is very possible. Let us be honest with ourselves, and know the real fact. He will not interfere with us. He will not bid his disciples bind us. He will leave us to damage His cause by worldliness and selfishness, if we wish to do so. He will appeal in the name of His Love for us; but if we reject the appeal, we can follow our own course: "That thou doest, do quickly." Only then there awaits us the doom of the Judgment: "He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still; he that is filthy, let him be filthy still."

Or is our failure due to weakness rather than depravity of purpose? Then there is no

need for despair, provided we have not become content to be weak. We fail through being off our guard when the temptations come; we fail because duty takes unexpected forms for which we are not prepared; we fail from sheer weakness of will and failure to brace ourselves to the endurance of ridicule or pain. But if our real and deepest wish is to be loyal, and we can learn to trust God to give us power to carry out His will, the failures which grieve us should never cause despair. "The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied Me thrice. Let not your heart be troubled; trust God; and trust Me."

XVIII

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

November 5, 1911.

Hebrews, xii. 18, 22–24.—"For ye are not come unto a mount that might be touched; but ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant."

"I BELIEVE in the Communion of Saints." It is an integral part of the Creed; it is not something which a few peculiarly constituted people may believe if they are so disposed; it is something accounted by the Church as real and as vital as the Catholic Church or the Forgiveness of Sins. We confess our belief in the Holy Spirit of God, who operating through the Holy Catholic Church, builds up the

Communion of Saints by entrance into which we receive Forgiveness of Sins. What, then, is this Communion of Saints?

When S. Peter had confessed that he believed his Master to be the promised Messiah, the Lord replied, "Thou art Peter," (which means Man of Rock) "and on this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." But the word translated Hell does not mean the place of punishment or the abode of devils, it means simply the abode of the dead, just as it does in the Creed, when we say that Christ desended into Hell, which means that He was in the place or state in which all men are after death. On the Rock of faith Christ founded His Church, and declared that the gates of Death should not prevail against it. Death makes no division in that society; those who still follow Christ on earth and those whose service is in whatever sphere may be appointed for us after this life is over, are still members of one fellowship. All of us here in the school and all who have been here and have left are all alike Reptonians; and those who have passed on equally with ourselves

are members of the one great family of God—the Communion of Saints.

It is this great fellowship of all the faithful, this ideal Church, of which S. Paul speaks as the mystical Bride of Christ. He does not separate into different compartments of his thought the Church militant here on earth, the Church expectant of the departed, and the Church triumphant of the completed Kingdom of God. He thinks of the Church as it ought to be—"not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without blemish." It exists and works "in the heavenly places," that is, in the spiritual sphere. For S. Paul says most emphatically that we who are united by faith to Christ, by virtue of His Resurection and Ascension, are even now in heaven. "God, being rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, quickened us together with Christ . . . . and raised us up with Him, and made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." And when we think of our Lord's Ascension we pray that S. Paul's great words may be true of us, and that, "like as we

do believe our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the heavens, so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend and with Him continually dwell." But all those who dwell with Him must thereby also dwell with one another :

> "One Family, we dwell in Him,
> One Church above, beneath."

This, then, is the Communion of Saints, the fellowship of all generations of believers, who are knit to one another by their common devotion to Christ. What does it mean to us ?

It means in the first place that those who have departed this life in the faith and fear of Christ are not indifferent to our success or failure in the fight of faith. Throughout the one great Fellowship or Communion the law holds good that if one member suffer all the members suffer with it and if one member rejoice all rejoice with it. Men are saddened sometimes by the thought that they owe to parents and friends debts of gratitude which they cannot pay or even express, because of the separation of death. Such sorrow is mistaken. We can repay our debts to those

who have passed through death, because in the communion of saints, which is the fellowship of Christ's disciples, death makes no breach or division. Those who have departed out of this life still watch us, and care for us and pray for us ; they rejoice in our victories and sorrow over our defeats, and in ministering to their joy we may repay the debt we owe, by resistance to temptations and by fidelity to duty. They still watch us and care for us and pray for us, just as we pray that "with them we may be partakers of God's heavenly Kingdom," for without them assuredly even heaven would be joyless.

Deeper than such sorrow, but still mistaken, is the grief of those who know that they have led into wrongdoing some whom they will never meet again, that they might confess their sorrow or attempt to repair the wrong. But for this grief, too, there is comfort in the doctrine of the Communion of Saints. Our struggles after righteousness are not without effect upon the spirits of the departed, and as we resist temptation and are faithful to duty we are helping any whom we led into wrong to purify and perfect their own characters.

But we shall never have any real belief in the truth of this Fellowship or Communion unless we try to make it actual in our own lives and in our dealings with those who are still on earth. We have allowed the sense of our Christian fellowship to be blunted by worldliness. We read with amazement Christ's praise of poverty and disparagement of wealth, because it seems to us that the best things in life—the society of refined people and even the affection of our intimate friends —are dependent on at least a moderate supply of this world's goods. If a man loses all his money, he must, in our day, lose most of his friends as well; they will not deliberately leave him; but he will have to retire to live where expenses can be avoided, and they will not follow him. If we had the true spirit of fellowship this would not be so. The sting of poverty is often the worldliness of a man's friends; and poverty can only deserve the blessing which Christ pronounced upon it when the sense of fellowship between His disciples is strong enough to overcome the natural worldliness of men.

How are we to acquire that sense of fellow-

ship? It is the gift of the Holy Spirit. S. Paul speaks of the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost—and we repeat his words often enough. But he did not mean what most of us mean by them; he did not mean that the Holy Spirit was to be our comrade, but that we were to be comrades of one another, because we all possess, or rather all are possessed by, the One Spirit of God. It is always found that the way to bridge class divisions and create sympathy where it does not naturally arise, is to bring men together under the influence of some great purpose or ideal which all pursue. This has been a common experience of men; people who are timid and shy of one another may be brought to mutual understanding and friendship if they come together to carry out some great purpose, to achieve some reform, to conduct some research, to seek after truth together. And greatest of all such bonds ought to be that which arises from common devotion to the greatest of all causes, the growth of the Kingdom of God; yet for most of us there is no link with other men to be found in our religion; we have no fellowship of the Holy

Ghost, no sense that we belong to one another because we all belong to Him. If some stranger came up to one of us and claimed a rather intimate acquaintance on the ground that he worshipped the same God in the same Church, we should be outraged. That is all wrong. We allow people to claim our acquaintance because they belong to our house or to our school; that is recognised as a real bond of union; but merely to be worshippers of the same God is not enough to draw us to one another—because our worship is something laid over the surface of our lives, not something bursting from their inmost depths. We know some little fragment of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the Love of God; of the fellowship of the Holy Ghost we know nothing whatsoever. And if we feel no fellowship of Holy Spirit with those who are still fighting the battle by our side on earth, how can we realise the Communion or Fellowship of Saints in which the departed also are included? The cure for this deficiency, as for all others, is that we should make more frequent and more intimate our intercourse with Jesus Christ. The Spirit of

Holiness which will draw us to each other pervades the world, for it proceeds from the Father, and wherever the Father works it may be found; but to us it comes chiefly through our intercourse with Christ; it proceedeth from the Father and the Son. It is as we fix our thoughts and wills on the Lord Jesus and His work that we become filled with the Holy Spirit, with passion for righteousness and forgetfulness of self.

Above all, therefore, let us remember the great communion or fellowship to which we belong, in that service which is called by the name of our Holy Communion. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the Blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not a communion of the Body of Christ?" The word translated "communion" is the same as that translated "fellowship." S. Paul does not only mean that we partake in spirit of the Body broken and the Blood outpoured; he means also that we are comrades and partners one of another as we share that feast.

We come there to receive the Body and Blood of Christ, "which are verily and indeed

taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper." He Himself is veritably there. But we find Him there, not because our worship draws Him down to us, but because it lifts us up to Him. His sacrifice is perpetual; His will is wholly given to the Father; once in the history of men the whole nature of that sacrifice was set forth. But the sacrifice itself, which is His obedience and the submission of His will, is eternal. And if we use aright the Eucharistic and sacrificial Feast of the Lord's Supper, we there lift ourselves "in heart and mind" into the heavenly region where Christ dwells and wherein unceasingly His eternal sacrifice is offered:—

> "And now, O Father, mindful of the Love
> That bought us once for all on Calvary's tree,
> And having with us Him who pleads above,
> We here present, we here spread forth to Thee,
> That only offering, perfect, in Thine eyes
> The one true, pure, immortal sacrifice."

The elements upon the altar, the Bread and Wine which we receive, are the signs of the Life which is obedient even unto death, and which we receive that it may become our own. But as in heart and mind we lift ourselves

into that heaven where the Ascended Christ eternally offers the sacrifice of Himself, what is the congregation in which we find ourselves? It is not the few people assembled in church at the moment; it is the whole Communion of Saints. We hear the Absolution and the Comfortable Words; we lift up our hearts unto the Lord; and thereupon it is with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven that we laud and magnify His glorious Name. Patriarchs and Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists and Martyrs, heroes and men who followed duty as they saw it, and men who failed miserably, yet still put their trust in God, are the real congregation in the service of the Holy Communion or Holy Fellowship into which we enter as we receive into ourselves the life of Christ.

Our faith is so feeble that this great company is hidden from us as a rule. We think of Christ as present only in the consecrated elements or only in the souls of those who receive them; we think the worshippers are just those few who are present with us in the same building. But this is wrong. Christ is present wherever God is present; and that is

everywhere ; heaven and earth are full of His glory ; only we need aids and helps to make us realise His Presence ; and the congregation at His service is the whole Communion or Fellowship of Saints, and the service itself is the service of the Holy Fellowship or Holy Communion.

Divisions of space do not touch the heart and will. One man may be working here, and another in China and a third in South America ; yet they may remain close friends, and know that they are engaged in one work, whether it be the service of their nation or the service of their Church. Often they will forget each other ; but letters will pass between them, which will be symbols and sacraments of their friendship ; or they may have some appointed day on which each thinks of the others and rejoices in the knowledge of their affection. So it must be with us while our faith remains so feeble. For the most part we forget the Communion of Saints, the great Fellowship of the living and the departed to which we belong ; but in the service of that Fellowship let us remember it, and recall the nature of the congregation in which we are

worshipping. It is not the movement of our bodies up the chancel, it is the movement of our attention from selfish or worldly aims to the Purpose of God and Christ, it is our ascension in heart and mind to the heaven which is ever about us, which gives that service its significance.

For we do not come to a mount that may be touched, nor to an altar that may be seen with bodily eyes, but we come to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus.

XIX

THE DIVINE JUDGMENT

December 3, 1911. (*Advent Sunday.*)

Rev. i. 7.—"Behold he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they which pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him. Even so, Amen."

THROUGH all the Bible runs the thought of Divine Judgment. From the sentence upon Adam and Eve, and the condemnation of Cain, to the closing vision of S. John's Apocalypse, runs the great proclamation that God is King over the world that He has made, and requires absolute obedience to His command. And the various stages of religious development may be marked by the changes that pass over this great conception of the Divine Judgment.

At first it is the immediate judgment of

God upon the individual offender. Adam and Eve disobey; their innocence immediately is gone and with it all peace of mind. Cain "that did the first murder" brings death into a world that is represented as not knowing it till then, and he becomes a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth. The hand of God is seen in the evil consequences of men's misdeeds. Later on the thought of the Chosen Nation began to govern men's minds, and it was the nation rather than the individual that was threatened with judgment. All the prophets are chiefly concerned with the faithlessness of the whole people; the people sin, either led away by their kings or through sheer infidelity, and the people will go into captivity. "You only have I known of all the nations of the earth," says the word of the Lord through Amos, "therefore will I visit upon you all your iniquities." But it was soon felt that this judgment upon a whole people would be less than just to some individuals, and would, moreover, leave Jehovah without a witness in the world. So there arose the hope that a remnant would be delivered, saved from the general destruction, by

their faithfulness to hold up before the world the great truth that God is One and that the One God is Holy.

Meanwhile there arose also the expectation of an anointed Deliverer, sent by God to vindicate His Law and to establish the rule of righteousness. At first this promised Messiah was thought of as a King of the House of David, ruling in Jerusalem ; the government was to be upon His shoulder, and His name to be Wonderful—Counsellor, God-like Hero, Father Everlasting, Prince of Peace. He was not only to deliver Israel, but to found upon earth the Kingdom of God ; to pronounce sentence upon all who had offended God, and to reveal the God of Israel as the God of all the earth by bringing other nations into subjection to—or fellowship with—Israel. Then as the religious experience of the people deepened under the discipline of the captivity, men began to think of the Messiah, the promised Deliverer, rather as one who should descend from heaven with hosts of angels, summon all peoples to His judgment seat, pronounce their doom, and inaugurate the new era when God should manifestly rule in

the world and His law of righteousness be universally obeyed for evermore. Such is the vision of the coming of the Son of Man which we find in the Book of Daniel; and we know, both from Ezekiel and from many of the Psalms, that the expected judgment was to be a judgment of individuals quite as much as of nations. Both in the earlier and the later prophets, from the time that the hope of the deliverance of the remnant is introduced, we find the conviction that the judgment will be a process of sifting out the faithful from the unfaithful. And the day is awaited with terror. "Men shall go into the caves of the rocks," says Isaiah, "and into the holes of the earth, from before the terror of the Lord; and from the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to shake mightily the earth."

This combination of fear with the expectation of a sifting out of the faithful from the unfaithful meets us again at the opening of the New Testament in the preaching of John the Baptist. "Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? . . . I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance; but He that cometh after me is mightier

than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly cleanse His threshing-floor; and He will gather up His wheat into the garner, but the chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire."

But, as we should expect, there is a change in the conception of those who had come under the influence of Christ. They had a new sense of proportion. It was not the punishment that seemed to them so terrible but rather the sin itself. S. Paul describes in the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans the deliverance that had come to him through Christ. It was not deliverance from punishment, it was deliverance from sin itself. His sin had filled him with fear; but it was not fear of punishment, it was fear of committing the same wrong act again. He felt helpless—"The evil that I would not, that I do. . . . O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? I thank my God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." In Christ he found the power which could change his heart. And the

sifting out of the true servants of God is imaged by him as the almost automatic result of the Life and Death of Christ. As S. John says, "this is the Judgment, that light is come into the world, and men preferred darkness rather than light," so S. Paul sets up before men's souls the Cross of Christ, and sees men judged by the effect it has upon them. To some it is a scandalous idea; to some it is just stupid; but to some it is the answer to the deepest need of their heart and mind and conscience. "We preach a Messiah on a Cross, to Jews a scandal and to Gentiles an absurdity; but to the very people who are called, both Jews and Greeks, a Messiah who is God's power and God's wisdom." To people who are morally self-satisfied, and are anxious that the faults of their neighbours should be sternly corrected, this picture of the Messiah, the Judge of the world, dying on a Cross is a stumbling-block, a scandal, a thing morally objectionable; of course we don't say such things of Christ Himself, but we say them of anyone who tries to imitate Him. And to people who sit in their arm-chairs, and think how they

would have made the world if they had happened to be God—a process which both in ancient Greece and modern Europe has often usurped the great name of philosophy—the story of the Cross seems foolish; they would not have made a world which they could only save by dying for it. But to those who know their own defects and their own powerlessness, who see the taint of evil over all creation, and who know that their own best days are not the days of unbroken satisfaction and contentment but the days when they have struggled, even at great cost, against evil in themselves and the society they live in—to them it is as sunshine breaking through a thunder-cloud when they hear that God is bearing all the sorrow that comes from sin, that God is bearing all the burden of His creatures' misery. For then the evil of the world will be done away with at last; then the weakness of their wills becomes the opportunity of God's strength, which is made perfect in weakness; then God Himself, as never before, is seen to be a God whom we can worship and must love.

But what has become of Judgment? Is the rejection of Christ its own punishment and the acceptance of Him its own reward? Well, what other punishment or reward can there be? When a man has been offered the secret of all joy and has rejected it, there is no need to threaten him with further pains and penalties; he has done for himself the worst thing that any one can do for him. He has chosen to follow the pleasures that never satisfy, the interests which fade and vanish, the purpose whose very achievement is trifling and paltry; for the time he may be contented, but by little and little that contentment must die away, and his soul shrivel "like a parched pea." There is no need to threaten such a man with hell; he has deliberately chosen it for his abode; at first, no doubt, he likes it very well; but as an abiding-place for eternity it is intolerable. There is no punishment beyond the fulfilment of his choice.

Nor is there any reward beyond the fulfilment of his choice for the man who tries to follow Christ. For to follow Christ is to be united with God; it is life eternal; it is heaven.

As we look at the life of fellowship with Christ from outside, we think it singularly unattractive; there is no comfort or indulgence in it; there is no providing for our private little luxuries; there is only the long, tiring journey which starts indeed from the Mount of the Transfiguration, but ends on the Mount of Calvary; the only sustenance we are offered is the strength to break our bodies as Christ broke His Body in symbol at the Last Supper and in fact upon the Cross. Yet those who shared His life found as they looked back that it was the Life of God, and that when they were with Him they were in heaven. There is no reward beyond, except to be with Him and to do His will; "In Thy presence is the fulness of joy."

"God is reigning from the Tree"; the Cross still stands before the minds of men, and men are still sifted by it and are divided, the sheep from the goats. And the "glorious majesty" in which Christ comes to found His Kingdom and to judge the world is the perpetual victory of the Cross and of the love there manifested over the worldliness of men.

But we live far away from God. We think

of Him as we might think of a human judge—a man unknown to us, whose duty is to enforce the law against offenders, for whom we have no personal feeling though we may fear what he will do to us. So the old Jews thought of God and His judgment; but not so should we think of it. For "we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but we have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father." Let us try to believe in God's Fatherhood, we that have been made "children of God." If we disobey our own parents, we may be punished; but surely none of us is so selfish as to fear the punishment as much as we fear the pain our disobedience gives to them. So let it be with our thought of God; His love exceeds their love, and His suffering at our wrongdoing exceeds theirs. He may punish us, but our fear will not be fear of punishment. S. Peter denied his Master at the supreme crisis of His life; do you think blows or flames of fire could have stung him more than what the Master did?—"The Lord turned and looked upon Peter; . . . and he went out and wept bitterly."

We know that no rules or regulations can ever be so subtly framed as to cover all the details of life, and if we think of God as Law-giver and Judge we shall feel that much of our lives lies outside the scope of His command. Even our consciences do not cover all our lives; they approve this and condemn that; but on very much they give no help whatever; and often when they ought to speak clearly they are silent. We know that we have a more searching test than our own consciences in our sense of shame when any that we care for or respect find us out in some mean action. If we become aware that the approach of footsteps makes us anxious, then we are doing wrong, even if our consciences had made no protest at all. For our consciences are never much better than we ourselves are; they are just our accepted moral standards. And the sense of shame before those we love is a surer guide. But let us remember that the gaze of God is fixed upon us more constantly than that of friends or parents. If we really believed in Him and were conscious of His Presence, shame would keep us from wrongdoing even when duty failed.

In the sense of the Presence of God we have a surer guide to life than any law can be; in the knowledge of His love we have at once the pledge of our deliverance from sin and the punishment of our sin in time past.

"For, behold, He cometh"; eternally He cometh; He is in the world, building up His Kingdom. "He cometh with clouds"—the power of Heaven is on His side and the triumph of His cause is sure. "And every eye shall see Him," for at the last the world will have become manifestly obedient to Him. "And they also which pierced Him," and then they will know the sinfulness of their sin.

Let us on this Advent Sunday fix our minds on the certainty of the Divine Judgment. The one thing that matters in the end is how we stand in that Judgment. The call of Christ comes to us to follow Him: and we pause, and reflect, and wonder if the path He treads is one where it would be good for us to follow; and often we refuse; and we think that we were the judges and it was the call of Christ on which sentence was pronounced. But it is not so. It is we who are

judged, not Christ; and the man who has rejected Christ has thereby condemned himself.

For, behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and we also which pierce Him.

If we try in the manner of the old prophets or of S. John in the Apocalypse to gather up in one picture the significance of the Divine Judgment upon our lives as it has been unfolded in successive generations, and as the Judgment itself runs its course through all the ages, the picture will be something like this. We shall go back first to the vision of Daniel: "I beheld till thrones were placed and the ancient of days did sit . . . . thousand thousands ministered unto Him and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him; the judgment was set and the books were opened." We are summoned before the Judgment Seat, and we fall prostrate expecting the sentence which must pronounce our doom. And there is silence. For a while we wait in wonder. When we look up the pomp and the majesty are gone; the innumerable attendant hosts are gone; the Judgment

Seat is gone. But set between earth and sky there is a Cross, and on it hangs a Sufferer; and one whisper fills the world—"Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

XX

VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE

December 17, 1911.

S. John i. 10, 11.—"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own home, and his own people received him not."

It is natural on the last Sunday of this term that our thoughts should be fixed on the great festival of the birth of Christ. There is no end to its significance. But to-day we will attend only to the contrast between what is found in it by the Christian and what is seen there by the outside world. It was the coming of God to His people; but all that an official record could have stated would have been the birth of a baby in a stable. And the contrast in the opening scene between the visible and the invisible fact is maintained

throughout His life. There was nothing about Him which compelled obedience, still less anything which compelled worship; many heard Him teach and saw Him work miracles without being drawn into the society of His followers; only a few felt His power. It was the Kingdom of God whose proclamation He was scattering as a sower scatters seed, but the seed often fell among thorns or on rocky ground. Even the few whom He called to Himself did not recognise Him as Messiah till the ministry was nearly over. Even His Death, whereby the world was redeemed, has a quite commonplace historical explanation, and S. John emphasises the fact that the very words of Caiaphas, which were the expression of worldly cynicism, also express the uttermost truth of the matter: "It is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." And at last by a climax of irony, the Body of the Lord was hurried into a grave, lest that Sabbath should be broken, His contempt and neglect of which had first aroused opposition against Him. It is as though it had been part of the purpose of God that nothing in that life should be of

a kind to compel obedience or worship except in those whose hearts and consciences could be touched by the Divine Spirit which guided it. So you will remember that in the Epistle to the Hebrews the Human Nature of Christ is compared to the veil which hung over the entrance to the Holy of Holies in the Jewish Temple, concealing it from all outside : we are to enter the Presence of God " by the Blood of Jesus, by the way which He dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say His Flesh." The humanity of Christ—the fact that He shared in our emotions, hopes and disappointments, the fact that He lived at a particular time and place and was put to death because the priests feared Roman intervention if they could not control a religious fanatic such as He appeared to be—all this hides from us His Divinity, unless we first share that human life, that activity of self-forgetful service ; but as we share it, we find that it is Divine. His Humanity is the veil that hides from us His Divinity until we have made that Humanity our own, that is, until our lives are being fashioned in the likeness of His life. And for

this reason it is the Human Nature of Christ—His Body and Blood—which is offered us in the Communion.

If we have learnt the lesson that spiritual things are spiritually discerned, and that God draws near to us in ways which only those who are trying to serve Him can recognise, we shall be able to apply it in all departments of our life.

Especially shall we apply it to our School; like every spiritual thing, it has a body and a soul. Its body is the place with its buildings and playing-fields; and we care for the place as we care for the features and gestures of people that we love. But we care for their features because they express to us their minds and spirits. And so we shall think of Repton, not merely as a place where we have lived, but as a spirit that has exercised an influence on our lives from which we hope we may never escape. It is to keep that influence strong, as well as to revisit friends and scenes of happiness, that Old Reptonians come back to us. And you who are now leaving us will always, I hope, be loyal, and rejoice in being loyal, to the spirit of the School, which is a

spirit of God. You will not think only of outward successes ; you will not think at all of whatever in the School, while you were boys in it, may have been ungenerous or selfish or impure, for these are the spots upon the sun and its radiance is in spite of them. But you will think of the real spirit of the place, which buildings and records of success cannot reveal —the spirit of simplicity, of friendship, of conscientiousness, of loyalty to a brotherhood —and you will wish that this spirit may for ever control your lives.

And as our loyalty to the School fastens on the unseen qualities rather than on anything that is visible to bodily eyes, so our national patriotism will be one that cares more for the character and spirit of the people than for material greatness. We shall value Empire, not as the satisfaction of a futile pride, but as the opportunity of influencing human history, and guiding it according to the law of God, by whom the opportunity is given. We shall believe that the real greatness of a nation is made secretly, as all true greatness is made secretly. We shall know that the clatter of party politics, and even the clash of national

armaments, is a mere dust-storm that rises off the surface of things, compared with the change of ideas and the widening of sympathy which constitute the real history of mankind.

Thus training ourselves to see the spiritual truth of things, we shall become aware that all our life is full of events in which we may meet with God, and that all the world—the wicked world, the dull, prosaic world—is full of His glory for those who have eyes to see it. We shall find that the people we are tempted to despise are living better lives than we are; they may not be conspicuous; they may not succeed in what they undertake; they may be awkward and lack the social gifts and graces; but perhaps they have humility which we lack, and practise self-denial, from which we shrink; or that people of whose conduct we disapprove are struggling, fitfully, perhaps, but earnestly, against the temptations before which they fall, and that the Spirit of God is active in their lives. We shall find that accidents, as they appear to the outside world, are really special opportunities given to us by God, so that even

what seem disasters may be used for His glory. The very drudgery of life, which for most of you consists in using dictionaries and grammars, may be lightened and transformed by the recollection that in it we are helping or fitting ourselves to help the cause of God in the world. Grief and sorrow lose their bitterness when we remember that they are one means by which we may share the Divine Life of Christ, and that our memorial of the greatest tragedy in history is a sacrifice indeed, but a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

As we look upon life and the world in this way, we find the spiritual presences all about us, and especially in the Communion Service we find Christ verily and indeed coming into our lives. That world becomes to us at times more vivid than earth and sky.

> "O world invisible, we view thee,
> O world intangible, we touch thee,
> O world unknowable, we know thee,
> Inapprehensible, we clutch thee;"
>
> * * * *
>
> "The angels keep their ancient places;
> Turn but a stone, and start a wing!
> 'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,
> That miss the many-splendoured thing.

"But (when so sad thou canst not sadder)
Cry ;—and upon thy so sore loss
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder
Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross.

"Yea, in the night, my soul, my daughter,
Cry,—clinging heaven by the hems ;
And lo, Christ walking on the water
Not of Genesareth but Thames.

Thames or Trent, or wherever else it may be, it is by our side that we shall find Christ if we expect to find Him. You have all seen reproductions of the great Italian pictures, where the painter has represented the saints of his own district or order kneeling with shepherds or kings at the cradle of the Infant Christ ; so Fra Angelico puts S. Dominic and S. Thomas Aquinas along with Peter and James and John as witnesses of the Transfiguration. And if some modern prosy person had said to him, "But they were not there," the painter would have answered, "What do you mean ? They were there every day of their lives."

It may be so for us if we will have it so. If as we read of Christ we also pray to Him we shall find Him at our side. For the

Life He lived almost two thousand years ago was merely the appearance at a single time and place of what He is eternally. And as on Christmas Day we receive in the Holy Communion His human nature, let us think of the Baby in the manger to whom a world's worship is ascending, and remember that His Childhood, with all other periods of His Life, tells us something of the eternal truth of God. We have learnt from His Ministry that God loves as men love—only more intensely and more constantly; we have learnt from His Death that God suffers as men suffer—only more terribly and more self-forgetfully. Let us learn from His Infancy that God desires love and mirth as children desire it, so that even in our merry-making we may be near to God. We have made our religion a stern thing, which stands at the gateway of pleasure and says, Don't. We forget that Christ compared John the Baptist to the children playing at funerals, who mourned that others might lament, but compared Himself to children making merry and piping that others might dance. We forget that our Christmas rejoicings are, after all, a form

of Divine Service. We have made our religion sombre by thinking of the tragedy of Christ's Death, or glorious by thinking of the triumph of His Resurrection; let us make it intimate and cheerful by thinking of the innocence of His Childhood. For if the Death and Resurrection rouse us to wonder and awe, no less are we roused to wonder by the thought

"That the great Angell-blinding light should shrinke
His blaze, to shine in a poore shepherds eye;
That the unmeasur'd God so low should sinke
As Pris'ner in a few poore Rags to lye;
That from His Mothers Brest he milke should drinke
Who feeds with Nectar Heav'ns faire family;
That a vile Manger His low Bed should prove,
Who in a Throne of stars Thunders above.

"That He whom the Sun serves, should faintly peepe
Through clouds of Infant flesh; that He the old
Eternall Worde should be a Childe, and weepe;
That He who made the fire should feare the cold;
That Heav'ns high Majesty His Court should keepe
In a clay cottage, by each blast control'd.
That Glories self should serve our Griefs and feares,
And free Eternity submit to yeares."

Can we make that real to ourselves? Can we see God lying in the manger-cradle? We

shall do so if in our school, in our nation, in the life of men and of the world we are caring more for the eternal things which are not seen than for the temporal things which are seen. And by our capacity to see God there we are judged, and separated—the sheep from the goats. For "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came to His own home, and His own people received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God."

XXI

THE DEDICATION OF STRENGTH

January 21, 1912.

Rev. ii. 17.—"To him that overcometh . . . . I will give a white stone and upon the stone a new name written which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it."

Most of us only bring to God our weaknesses and failings. We find duties that are too hard for us, or temptations that are too strong for us, and we turn to God for help. But our strength we seldom dedicate to Him. All through our lives we are trying to follow out our own purposes instead of God's, and only turn to Him to make good our deficiencies for fear lest they should prevent our fulfilment of our own purposes. Thus, a man forms some ambition, and finds that his own love of pleasure, or his tendency to follow the lead of his companions, whatever it may be, or his

idleness, or his bad temper, makes it impossible to realise his ambition; so he turns to God and prays for self-control, and firmness of will and strength of character and industry and good nature. And, of course, in itself it is better to come to God in that way than not to come at all. But the religion of such a man remains selfish; it is not Christian religion.

What we need, if we are to be followers of Christ, is that we should approach God through our strength as well as through our weakness. And, indeed, this is necessary to our moral safety; there is always great danger that we may leave unwatched and unguarded those points at which we suppose that we are strong, and then the man who thinks himself honourable surprises himself in a mean action, the man who thinks he has self-control surprises himself in an act of indulgence, or the man who thinks himself reliable and industrious finds that he has slipped almost imperceptibly into negligence and idleness. But it is not for these reasons chiefly that we should dedicate our strength to God; it is because we wish, or ought to

wish, that our service may be as full and complete as possible, and because we never know what our strength is until it is dedicated.

We are apt to be very fatalistic about ourselves. We take our capacities and incapacities as we find them, and are inclined to leave the matter there. We say, with great contentment, "Oh, I never could do that sort of thing," as if this were a reason for never trying. We take the impulses of our various natures as if they were laws of our being. And for this reason much latent strength, which might be ours, is never developed at all. We have no right to sit down contentedly under our imperfections, It is a denial of our faith in Christ; for if that faith means anything, it means a belief that Christ can transform our natures. The first words of our Lord to S. Peter were. "Thou *art* Simon, the son of John; thou shalt be *called*"—something quite different—"Peter," the man of rock on whom the Church was to be founded.

Here we are in a world that seems too strong for us; we are its playthings; we are

made what we are by heredity and circumstance, and there is no escape. Yes; it is quite true; and Christ knows it quite well. "Thou *art* Simon, the son of John." But there is a power available for us if we will make use of it: "Thou shalt be *called* Cephas," or Peter, the Man of Rock." It is not necessary that we should all come to a single type; God has His plan for each of us; but if we put our strength in His hands and dedicate it to His service, He will make of us something very different from what we are, something which only He knows fully, which we may know in part, but which our friends and acquaintances do not know at all. "To him that overcometh will I give a white stone, and on the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth but he that receiveth it."

I said just now that our very strength is liable to be a source of weakness to us, because we tend to leave our strong points unguarded. This, no doubt, is part of the truth which underlies the Greek belief in Nemesis. Over and over again the Bible insists on this; I will give only one example. You

remember that the quality specially mentioned as conspicuous in Moses was his meekness. Yet it was by failure in this point that he drew on himself the displeasure of God. On one occasion it was through self-assertiveness; in some way, we do not know how, he took glory to himself when he smote the rock and the water gushed out. On another occasion it was through excessive self-depreciation. When God first sent him to accomplish the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, he raised many objections, and at last he pleaded his own incompetence; he was assured that he would be given all he needed for the work, yet still he urged that another should be found: "Send, I pray Thee, by the hand of him whom Thou wilt send. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses." He was failing through lack of meekness. Instead of doing his duty without troubling either whether he was competent or whether he deserved credit, he was thinking about himself. He failed at his strong point.

We know pretty well what our strong points are. One has the power of command, so that others naturally and easily do what he

tells them; another has influence, so that without his telling them others take their cue from him; another has brains and can see his way clearly in what to others is mysterious or unintelligible; another has perseverance, and another has good nature. All of these are points of strength in those who possess them, and must be brought to Christ and dedicated to His service. We do not know what they may grow into, but we know what they are now, and in what ways our life of service may commence. The new name which Christ will give us when we finally overcome all opposition and give our lives into His hands is only known to Him as yet, but the first few letters of it we can read already. Is our knowledge of it to stop at the first few letters, or shall we let Him spell out to us the whole?

He cannot do that unless we are really ready to use our powers in His service. "To Him that overcometh" the promise is given. What is it that we have chiefly to overcome? Chiefly our own desires and purposes. The thing which prevents God's plan for our lives from being fulfilled is just our own plan. We are always looking out for what is com-

fortable or attractive instead of what is serviceable. We know what we are capable of; and we set out to gain as much advantage to ourselves as we can from our capacity; we do not ask what we can do that will be of most value to other people or to the cause of God; and so we never know of what we might become capable if we were trying only to follow His will. We try, of course, to avoid positive wrong-doing; we try to tell the truth, and to keep ourselves pure, and to do as much work as seems to be expected of us; but beyond this we aim at living our own lives and pursuing our own enjoyments. And all this we have to overcome. It is here that the real struggle of faith begins. It is far easier to avoid wrong-doing than to seek out and to take opportunities of doing right. And there is no difficulty at all in praying to God for the strength to resist temptation; there is very great difficulty in praying to God that we may be used, and used up, in His service. The approach to God through weakness is easy enough; the dedication of our strength is desperately hard.

It is so hard that even those few who

seriously attempt it are perpetually on the verge of giving it up. There is the persistence of the coward's plea—why set oneself up to be better than other people? But there is no "setting oneself up." We are called by Christ to His discipleship. We do not say that we are fit to be near Him or make any claims for ourselves. But we have heard His call. It has come to us in the teaching about Him which we have had from infancy; it has come through our knowledge of the world we live in and its dire need of Him; it has come at our Confirmation; it has come perhaps to our own souls in the song of praise or in the silence of Communion. We have heard His call, and we dare not ignore it; we do not set ourselves up above others; we do not know either the call that has reached them or their way of answering it. But we know that we are called, not by ourselves but by Christ, and we try to follow.

But that coward's plea is not the deepest reason for the Christian's despondency: that is to be found in the failure of his sincerest efforts. Christ calls the disciple to walk with Him on the stormy waters of life; and he tries

to obey; he leaves his security and comfort; and he begins to sink. "Wherefore didst thou doubt?" Who knows? But if our faith is wavering and unstable, what shall strengthen it? Here is our problem, that in our very efforts to give ourselves to Christ, our concern for ourselves rises against our will and paralyses us. Often and often we have intended that for all our future lives we will work our very hardest to fulfil our duty as we see it, and that we will let no love of luxury or comfort or pleasure of any kind stand between us and the dedication of all our powers to God; at Confirmation, at some of our Communions, at some turning points in our career, we have known that we meant this; but we go on just as before, and still there is the duty neglected because we couldn't take the trouble, and the friend who is estranged because we don't see why we should give way more than he, and the evil unrebuked because we fear unpopularity. Why should we try again when so little comes of resolutions so heart-searching?

If we ever feel like that, let us ask if we have ever really dedicated our strength to God.

Let us look out for our strongest qualities, where failure is least likely, and come to God through them. It is hard, because we are proud of our good points, and want to shew them off; and we can never shew off anything which is given to God. "Shewing off" is a way of using them for ourselves. But we can do it if we like; it is the way of safety, and the only way of safety. For only in this way shall we avoid the dangers of undue confidence in our own strength and also the disappointment of repeated failure in discipleship.

So we start the New Year determined to give our best to God; not trying to forecast what He will do with us or make of us, but assured that in His service we shall find strength and power which we could never otherwise possess, and that through us is being accomplished something far greater than by ourselves we could have done. Twelve very ordinary men who had received the Spirit of Christ founded the Christian Church and turned the world upside down. What cannot Christ do through us if we dedicate our strength to Him?

XXII

QUINQUAGESIMA

February 18, 1912.

S. Matthew xxii. 37–40.—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; this is the great and first commandment; and a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hangeth the whole law and the prophets."

It is the festival of Christian love, that love which flows forth from those who have the Spirit of Christ both towards God and towards men. And we can hardly remind ourselves too often that our love for men is the surer test of our Christian discipleship. For if we are devoted to God, without finding ourselves equally devoted to men, that is sure proof that our devotion to God rests upon a

misconception of His nature. If God is the Father of Jesus Christ and has revealed Himself in His Son, then true love of God must manifest itself in the love of men.

This does not mean merely cordiality of affection for our personal friends ; it means a zeal for the welfare of all men, whether they are congenial to us or not. It is not our friends that we are bidden to love but our neighbour. A man chooses his friends ; but he finds his neighbours provided for him. It is our relations with those chance people with whom the accidents of life have brought us into contact which are the test of our Christian spirit. The family that lives next door, with their vexatious habits and assuming manners ; the impracticable partner or the incompetent subordinate ; the overbearing superior, or the servant whose qualities we never paused to consider ; those with whom you share a study or a bedroom—these are our neighbours. It is so easy to be enthusiastic for good causes, and even to work hard for them ; the difficulty begins with the tiresome people who always try our tempers ; but it is among these, and not in our affection

for friends or our enthusiasm for the welfare of the Hottentots, that we find our Christian spirit tested. If a man can succeed in being invariably courteous and considerate in dealing with his neighbour, that man has some measure of the spirit of Christ.

That spirit rises above all considerations of merit or desert. So soon as we find ourselves considering whether anyone deserves our sympathy, we can be sure that we have sunk below the Christian level. The charity of Christ is perfectly indiscriminate; He makes no inquiries into people's antecedents; He says to the man whose paralysis was the result of his own wrongdoing: "Thy sins are forgiven thee." The point in God's perfection which we are bidden to imitate is precisely this lavish and unquestioning bounty: "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you, that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. . . . Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Of course this does not mean that we are to

ignore the differences in the need, of different people. We have learnt that to give money to beggars in the road is very often to inflict an injury on them, because of its damaging effect upon their character. But that is no reason for giving nothing; we ought, as we have opportunity, to give what is needed, and that will usually be something far harder to give than money, for it will be time—time to make the man's acquaintance, to help him to find work, to keep in touch with him when the work is found, so that he may be steadied against his temptations, and gradually to build up a strong character. And if we have little time that can be spent so, we should support those who are giving their lives to such work.

Sometimes we are inclined to say of people who have brought trouble on themselves by their own misconduct or lack of character—"It is his own fault, and now he must suffer for it." But if Christ had taken that line, where would our redemption be? No Christian can ever speak like that. He will say: "After all, if it is not his own fault there is not so very much to worry about; we have

only to give him a new start and it will be all right. But if it is his own fault—what can we do to help?"

Our Christianity is being tested every day and every hour by the opportunities presented to us in our intercourse with chance acquaintances and passers-by. But while love of men is the distinguishing mark of the Christian, the love of God, which of necessity is hidden from men's eyes, is deeper. In the First Epistle to the Corinthians, at the close of an argumentative discussion of spiritual gifts, S. Paul breaks out into an inspired character-sketch of his Master under the form of a lyrical ode on charity: "Charity suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." We know the original of that portrait. And we know that in the experience of Christ the love of men is rooted in the love of God.

We are bidden to love our neighbours as

ourselves; and indeed we cannot love them more, for we must be the centre of our social relationships. But we are bidden to love God above and beyond all else; for He is not just another Person standing over against us like our fellow men, but He is one in whom we live and move and have our being. Few if any of us could claim that we thus love God; perhaps few of us could claim that we really love Him at all.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind." All our nature must take its part. We will not worry ourselves with questions about the exact meaning of heart and soul and mind as our Lord's hearers would have understood the words; let us consider them in the natural meaning which they have for us, taking the last first.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind"; here, where for most of us work with our minds is our primary duty, this ought to be easy. Let us try sometimes to remember God in our work, and to remember our work in our prayers. Do not forget that the duty to work hard does not arise only

from your work being the thing you are set to do, but also from the fact that you will need all your faculties later on if you are to serve God worthily. And while we fix our minds upon our work with the remembrance that this is for the time our way of serving Him, we are beginning to love Him with our mind. But that is not enough. We must perpetually fix our minds upon God Himself. We need to remind ourselves over and over again of all that we really know of God. We forget Him; or at least we forget what He is like, even when we remember that He exists. And to remember that He is revealed in Jesus Christ, or to see even a small part of what we mean, when we say that He is revealed in Jesus Christ, requires an effort of thought —not because it is so hard to understand, but because it is so remote from our ordinary habit of mind. There is no difficulty in understanding the meaning of S. John's words "God is Love"; the simpleton understands them as well as the philosopher; but neither philosopher nor simpleton can hold that thought in his mind without great mental effort. We have to teach ourselves

to think about God, and to turn our thoughts often towards Him.

And the older among you ought to be already learning to think about God in another sense; you ought to be trying to see how your thoughts about God fit in with what you believe about the world, with what science has taught us, and history, and the voice of conscience. You will find many problems hard to solve, and some which at present seem insoluble; doubts will arise which you cannot put aside; the mystery of things at times will overpower you. But until we have faced all this, our faith is not completely our own; and to love God with our mind must mean that we set ourselves to find the whole truth concerning Him.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul." All our powers of life and purpose must be dedicated. We have to try to find our vocation. Some people have an absurd idea that men have no vocation except to the ministry of the Church. But there is no Christian who will not become conscious of vocation if he expects it. The circumstances of his life, the bent of his inclinations, the nature

of his capacities may show him where it lies. If we can stop looking out for what will pay best and ask instead where we can be of most use, we shall find our vocation. For we are called to serve, not to enjoy—not to be ministered unto but to minister.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." But most of us find that even though we do our duty to the utmost, and train ourselves to think of God, and try to hear His call and give our lives to His obedience, it is still mechanical and cold; our hearts are not touched. When people speak of the Presence of God, and the nearness of Christ, we rather wonder what they mean. Probably we can think of times when we have felt these things, but ordinarily they seem remote, and we are tempted to wonder whether, at those times, we were not deceiving ourselves. We feel that this coldness is all wrong, but we see no way of altering it. What are we to do?

In the first place do not let us be in a hurry. God waited many thousands of years before He gave to men the perfect revelation of His Love; He is waiting still, while that gift of

revelation produces its effect. He is very patient; and He is not at all theatrical. We have eternity before us, and we shall find His Presence at last; here or hereafter we shall learn the truth. There is no need for hurry. Let us be natural and spontaneous and sincere; if we try to force ourselves, or to pretend we have emotions which as a matter of fact we have not, we shall only postpone the day of our attainment; for love can only exist in spontaneity.

And in the second place let us be very careful always to think of God in terms of Christ. Very often we say our prayers with no thought of God before our minds, and that is why they are so cold. Perhaps it is partly because the Communion Service keeps the thought of Christ constantly before our minds that most of us can attend to it throughout as we hardly ever do to Morning or Evening Prayer. Let us, as we kneel to pray, call up before us the memory of some scene in our Lord's Life, and try to imagine Him there before us; call up the picture of the Lord upon the Cross, and remember His saying—"He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."

Use an actual picture, or crucifix, that you can see with your bodily eyes, if you find help in that way; but, in whatever way, fill the vacant throne of the universe in your imagination with the Figure of Christ—Christ the Teacher, Christ the Healer, Christ the welcome Guest at wedding feasts, and the friend of His followers, Christ the Redeemer, Christ the Vanquisher of Death. It is through Him that the love of God takes possession of our hearts, calling forth our love in answer. And if the testimony of the saints means anything, it means that there is no joy like the joy of the Love of God.

> "The love of Jesus, what it is,
> None but His loved ones know."

But that English version in insipid:

> "Nec lingua valet dicere,
> Nec litera exprimere,
> Expertus potest credere
> Quid sit Jesum diligere."

For He is more than all His titles; He is more than we could without Him conceive even God Himself to be. The greatest of His titles in the New Testament is that which S. John

gives Him—the Logos, the Eternal Thought and Wisdom of God. The title is not too great for Him ; rather He is too great for it. As Mr. Glover said lately, " No one sings ' How sweet the Name of Logos sounds.'" It is Jesus Himself—not because of His Messiahship or any other office that He fulfils, but because of being just what He is—to whom our hearts may be given. As we read of Him, and think of Him, and pray to Him, and worship Him, we shall find ourselves beginning to love the Lord our God with all our hearts.

XXIII

DEATH AND RESURRECTION

March 3, 1912.

In Memoriam.

Eustace Arden (P. G. E.) died in the Sanatorium, after a long illness, early on Friday morning, March 1.

I. Cor. xv. 55–58.—"O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law: but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

The Church of Christ is before everything else the Church of the Resurrection. It was the Resurrection of Christ which transformed the scattered and dispirited disciples into the nucleus of the Church militant and triumphant; and the Resurrection is the

burden of their preaching. We are liable to lose sight of this. We are so conscious of the power of the Cross, that we forget how black and desolating a view of life the Cross would lead us to form, were it not for the fact of the Resurrection. We take the joy and triumph of the New Testament for granted, without stopping to think how strange a thing it is. Think of all the other great literature of the world, secular or religious, apart from the New Testament and what is directly inspired by it. All that great literature reaches its climax in Tragedy; it deals with love that wins no return, with suffering that is undeserved, and with death. Among the Greeks it is the tragedians who impress us as having grasped most surely the substance of life; their great historian, whether consciously or not, sets forth the history of his people as a great Tragedy; even Plato, the greatest genius in the history of thought, owes much of his hold on the minds of men to the wistful sadness that runs through nearly all his work. The same is true of Roman literature and of the literature of modern Europe. Anyone who

was asked to name the greatest of English writings would immediately mention the tragedies of Shakespeare. Or look at the other religions of the world; the conception of life which they offer is in some cases noble and manly and in others mean and servile; it is always sombre and usually sad. Only Christianity is always joyous. "How is it," asks Clement of Alexandria, "that the Church is the one thing on earth which always rejoices?"

We usually think of what cheers us as something comparatively superficial. People who are unconquerably happy have, we often suppose, never had to face the great troubles of life. Comedy plays over the surface; it is tragedy which goes to the roots. Is Christianity the Comedy among religions? Does it win its joy and peace by turning its back upon the sorrow and gloom of life? It is the religion which pipes that men may dance; the fruit of its spirit is joy; is this because it has forgotten sin and death?

No; it is because it has faced them in their worst form, and has seen how God deals with them. The gloom of life is always due

either to our forgetfulness of God or to the sense that God has forgotten us. "We have heard with our ears, O God, and our fathers have told us what Thou hast done in their time of old. . . . But now Thou art far off and puttest us to confusion." That is the feeling which possessed the Apostles on the first Good Friday. Christ had staked everything upon the conviction that God would act; and it had led Him to the Cross. That was the end of it all. The great movement which He had inaugurated was a failure; the Kingdom He came to found was a delusion. "We hoped that it was He which should redeem Israel." The Cross seemed not only the end of the Master; it was the denial of God. God had forsaken is Well-beloved Son.

We must understand that, if we are to know what the Resurrection meant. It was not only the knowledge that the Master was alive; it was the proof that God cares and that God acts. This was the work of God Himself. "Him God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, because it was not possible that He should be holden of it";

"Him did God exalt with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour." God had answered Christ's cry of desolation—"Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" The answer is the Resurrection. The religion of Christ has full right to its irrepressible mirth and cheerfulness; it has faced the worst things in the world; the horror of sin was not known till sin sent Christ to the Cross; the terror of Death was not known till Death had mown down the fairest flower in the whole world's garden; and the light which shines in the Church is a light which breaks out of the very heart of gloom.

The Resurrection of Christ is the reversal of tragedy. Those who have learnt to see in the story of Christ the parable of the eternal operations of God are ready to face anything that may come without gloom and without despair. The joy of this faith is intoxicating; "Be not drunken with wine," says S. Paul, "but be filled with the Spirit." The chief difficulty of a real Christian is to sympathise enough with the despondency of others; he is so incorrigibly happy that he finds it hard to share the gloom of other men. For he has

pricked the bubble of sorrow, and he knows that even at the heart of sadness there is joy, and joy, and joy for evermore.

We have not maintained the triumphant attitude of mind which is characteristic of the New Testament. We rather cling to our sorrows instead of forcing them to yield up their treasures. At times of bereavement we shut up our houses and clothe ourselves in black, and we do every unchristian thing that we can think of. We are bound to feel the sorrow; parting is bitter. We should be wrong if we did not feel it. But as we feel it, we shall find strength to bear it, if we remember that by sorrow and by pain the world is redeemed and that death is the gate of immortality. Let us not try to stifle our spontaneous sorrow; but in all our deliberate actions let us express to ourselves and to the world the certainty and the joy of our Christian faith.

We speak of death as the end. Yes; it is the end. But what is it the end of? It is the end of feebleness, of weakness, of impotence. But it is the beginning of energy, of strength, of power. The seed must fall into the ground

and die, if it is to bear fruit. "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power."

We think of death as separation; and of course it does make impossible the intercourse we had enjoyed before. But even this separation is not the real truth of the matter. The living and the dead alike stand in the presence of God; and when we become conscious of His presence, we find the presence also of all the fellowship of the departed, so that, as we are lifted in heart and mind into God's presence at our Communion Service, it is with all the company of heaven that we laud and magnify His Name. Not only in "some far-off, divine event," but whenever the Lord Jesus returns to the souls that trust Him, them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus doth God bring with Him.

You know why I am speaking of these things to-day. God has called to himself our school-fellow, Eustace Arden. It is not for us to question the providence of God. There is

a tombstone on a child's grave which bears for inscription this parable :—

A gardener was going round the garden with his master, and came upon a young and tender flower plucked off. He asked, "Who plucked this flower?" "I did," replied the master. And the gardener held his peace.

When death has visited a school, a peculiar solemnity comes into our lives. The sadness of bereavement is brought home to us ; we are forced to think for a moment of what it means that parents should lose their children ; we are forced to think for a moment how near to us, even while we are young, may be the inevitable close of our days on earth. It is a call of God to sympathy and to seriousness. It is an opportunity of entering into the sorrow and the solemnity of life. But as we sympathise, and as we pray that those who are nearest and most feel the loss may find comfort, and as we impress on our own heedless minds how solemn is our life, let us also remember, and, above all, here in the Chapel let us remember, that God in Christ has sounded all the depths of sorrow, and has revealed the glory which Death can no longer

conceal. We may mourn our own loss; but we may not mourn the dead. And the Church itself can never mourn at all; for every day of death is Easter-Day.

So we turn back to our ordinary lives, that ought never to be quite the same again. For we have been in the presence of what gives life its meaning. We ought to be less forgetful of the eternal things than we have been; more zealous to do our work as unto the Lord and not unto men. We ought not to be less happy, but we ought to be more serious; not more miserable, but more earnest. There ought to come into our lives more of that joy which is deeper than all pleasures or excitement —the joy which is the twin of love and peace.

"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

XXIV

PALM SUNDAY

March 31, 1912.

S. Mark, viii. 34.—"And he called unto him the multitude with his disciples, and said unto them, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

We commemorate to-day the rapidly extemporised triumphal Entry into Jerusalem by which our Lord challenged the religious authorities of His nation and brought upon Himself the Passion and Crucifixion. To the people it was the entry of the Messiah into His Kingdom's capital. "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; blessed be the kingdom that cometh, the kingdom of our father David." For them it was triumph; but not for Him, or at least not in the same sense. He had set His face stedfastly to go

to Jerusalem; He strode on before the terrified and amazed disciples, on the journey which was to culminate in His Death. As He journeyed, He had perpetually impressed upon them what was about to happen; but they could not understand it. It was something so foreign to their whole conception of God and His Christ that they utterly failed to grasp it.

It is natural that our thoughts should go back to the first moment that any of His disciples recognised Him as the Messiah. It was after they had been alone with Him on the long journeys to Syro-Phaenicia and to Caesarea Philippi. He has been waiting for them to learn to appreciate Him, and now He feels that they are ready. "Who do men say that I am? . . . . Who say ye that I am?" S. Peter answers that He is the Christ; and at once the Lord declares the new conception of the Messiahship which is the guiding thought of His Life. "The Son of Man must suffer." S. Peter protests and is rebuked; and then—"He called unto Him the multitude with His disciples and said unto them, If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me."

It was expected of the Messiah that He should enter Jerusalem in triumph, escorted by His followers. And our Lord says: Yes; there will be a triumphal procession; but it will not look like one; it will look like a gang of condemned criminals, each carrying his own gallows to the place of execution. For the cross had no glamour about it, and no mystical significance until Christ had died upon it. It was the ordinary instrument of Roman execution. We look back over the history of the Church; and we know that the long line of martyred saints are figures in Christ's triumphal entry into His Kingdom. Their pains have glorified the Church and furthered its extension. And we see in the Cross of Christ Himself the throne from which God reigns over the world. But at first this could not be seen. Had the disciples understood Christ's prediction of His Passion they could hardly have believed it; but they did not understand; and the Crucifixion plunged them into despair.

The moment that His disciples had recognised Him as Messiah the Lord started on His journey to Jerusalem, of which the

very purpose was His death. Now His last and greatest appeal was to be made. He had refused to give the sign from Heaven or to win the Kingdom by force. His Kingdom is not of this world; it is of the Spirit, rooted in men's appreciation of His grace and truth and love. To the love and devotion of men He appealed, and to nothing else; by their response to that appeal was to be founded the Kingdom in which peace and goodwill should for ever flourish and abound.

The great English religious genius whose life has lately been set clearly before the eyes of all who care to read, John Henry Newman, chose as his motto at the time of his elevation to the Cardinalate—"Cor ad cor loquitur:" heart speaketh to heart. That is a summary of the truth of God's dealings with men as they are revealed in the life of Christ. For if in that life there is made known to us "the very God," then what follows?

"So the All-great were the All-loving too;
So through the thunder comes a human voice
Saying, 'O heart I made, a heart beats here;
Face my hands fashioned, see it in Myself;

Thou hast no power, nor mayst conceive of Mine,
But love I gave thee, with Myself to love ;
And thou must love Me, who have died for thee.'"

Let us first recall the contrast of emotions presented to us in the story of the triumphal entry; all about Him were the shouting crowds; now, they thought, is the day of Israel's deliverance; now shall be founded the Kingdom of our father David; now begin the peace and goodwill of the Kingdom of God, universal righteousness securing universal happiness and prosperity. And in the centre is the Christ; He is indeed coming to claim His Kingdom and to deliver His people. But the Kingdom is to be reached through Gethsemane, through the faithlessness of His own followers, through the denial of Peter, through the trial before the High Priest and before Pilate, through ridicule, condemnation, scourging and death.

And then, remembering all this, let us consider the cause of the Kingdom of God in the world to-day, and our own attitude towards it. Do we, or do we not, believe that human welfare can only be reached by the influence of the Spirit of Christ and the

surrender of all human activities to its control? How many of us have considered the relation of the Coal Strike to the principles of Christ? Our real beliefs are not shewn by our attitude of mind in church; there we attend to those beliefs which we should like to hold, or which we suppose that other people think we ought to hold. Our real beliefs shew themselves in our spontaneous thoughts and our casual conversation. Has our conversation about the Coal Strike been guided or even coloured by any thought about Christian principle or any hope of a Christian society?

Perhaps, indeed, we have thought more than we usually do about the evils of selfishness and obstinacy. We have been saying, it may be, that it is a fine thing for the better paid men to stand by their less fortunate fellow-workers, but that when widespread distress is the result such loyalty should give way before a wider claim. That is all true enough; but do we really act on this principle? Do we always check narrower loyalties by wider? Do we desire never to gain any advantage for our own

House which may involve loss to the School? never to gain any advantage for our family which may involve loss to the community? never to gain any advantage for our own nation which may involve loss to mankind? We are ready enough with our morals for other people, when their conduct inconveniences us; it is more profitable to apply our morals to ourselves. There is no advantage in standing on one side and deploring the obstinacy of the parties to a dispute; let us rather see how far the temper of mind which issues in the dispute is our own temper of mind. If we deplore class-hatred and class-ambition, are we sure that we are free from class-contempt? Do we not instinctively look down on those who have much less money than ourselves and whose education has been the work, not of books, but of life itself? Do we not habitually think it a more serious offence for a poor man to be idle than for a rich man? But both alike can only live by consuming the fruit of labour, and if they offer no labour in return they are stealing; as Friedrich Paulsen tersely expresses it, "'If a

man will not work neither let him eat,' is only another way of saying, 'Thou shalt not steal.'" We are full of class selfishness; we do, as a matter of fact, judge people who belong to our own stratum in society by a different standard from that which we apply to others. And when those others do the same, we have no need to accuse them; it is better to take note of the evil results that spring from our own frame of mind when enough people share it, and improve matters in the only region under our control, that is in our own selves, in our thought and speech and action. That is our most immediate duty to the cause of the Kingdom of God.

The thought of that Kingdom and of the principles on which it rests ought to become increasingly the controlling power in our lives. It ought to govern our plans for our own future. Those of you who are now passing on from school to other forms of training or to the work which is to be your life's service of God and men, are naturally thinking of both past and future at this time. Let your dedication be genuine; turning points in life are great opportunities which

should not be missed; the resolutions which we make at such times are not kept utterly unbroken, but they may carry us a stage further than we had travelled before. Be sure that just now you make the service of God the aim of your life.

But the Kingdom which Christ claimed on the first Palm Sunday was not only dominion over individuals, it was the empire of the world. And just as our narrower loyalties should be held in check by wider in all spheres, so our patriotism should be held in check by loyalty to the empire of Christ. The last months have been filled with rumours of wars, and we have had to look in the face the possibility of war with another European and Christian nation. We heard people saying, War is now inevitable, and the sooner it comes the better. How will a Christian regard such a saying? He will think, if he does not say, War is never inevitable until human sin has made it so, and the history of nations is in the hands of God, Who will guide us if we trust in Him. But just at this moment, when both at home and abroad there is such an opportunity as

never existed before of claiming for Christ the civilisation of the world, when all European nations are trying to solve their problems of poverty and almost all the non-Christian nations are in a state of rapid and radical transformation, the Christian, who reflects upon the inevitable effect of a war in postponing or checking all that he most cares for, will draw back from it in horror; and as he realises its influence in moving the mockery of those whom we are calling to the worship of the Prince of Peace and to whom we are preaching the Sermon on the Mount, he will realise also that war between Christian nations at such a time would be an act of national or international treason to the Kingdom of God.

But if we are to apply such thoughts to the conduct of our lives, if we are to lead our nation to act by them, we must fill our hearts with a new devotion to the Person of Christ. If we are to join Him in His conquest of the world, we must, as He warns us, take up our cross and follow Him. It does not mean that we are to bear without loss of temper the various little inconveniences that attend our

self-indulgent lives. It means that we are to be ready, for the love of Christ, to do or to suffer simply anything. And it is in pondering and meditating upon the events which this week brings before us that we may learn something of the constraining love of Christ.

Still from the Cross He challenges the generations. "Who do men say that I am?" and there is none now but will answer that at least He is one of the Prophets. But that is not enough. If we are to enter the Kingdom which He came to found, we must recognise Him as its King, and the Spirit of His Life of sacrifice as the law for the individuals who are to be its citizens and for the nations which are to be its provinces. So He asks another question: "Who say ye that I am?"

We confess Him as Christ the King; but can we not do something more?

"See from His Head, His Hands, His Feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingling down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so Divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

By Thine Agony and Bloody Sweat, by Thy Cross and Passion, by Thy precious Death and Burial, by Thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost, Lord Jesus, teach us to love Thee.

XXV

DEPENDENCE

May 5, 1912.

Psalm lvi. 11.—"In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me."

S. John, xiii. 38; xiv. 1.—"Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice. Let not your heart be troubled. Trust God. And trust me."

THERE are few points in which men differ from one another so widely as in their liability to be distressed in mind or shaken in purpose by the circumstances and the accidents of life, and there is nothing which we admire in others or desire for ourselves so keenly as the moral grit which makes a man independent of his surroundings. But it is possible to set about acquiring such grit in ways that can only lead to disappoint-

ment. There are some for example who think that their strength of character may be at once shewn and increased by the badness of their manners; they are "not going to give way to anybody"; they owe no man anything and refuse therefore to pay common respect. There is no strength in this. And there are others, only a shade less foolish, who hope to acquire strength of character by always putting themselves in opposition to those among whom they find themselves. They say that they refuse to be put upon; they will not take their opinions from other people; they like to be independent. But they are not independent. A man who always resists or opposes is governed by circumstance every bit as much as a man who always conforms. He is not exercising and following an independent judgment; and if you know him you can make him do whatever you like by merely suggesting that he should do the opposite. There is no more strength or freedom in obstinacy than in compliance. If a man is to be genuinely independent of his surroundings from time to time he must be rooted in something which is

itself unmoved by the chances and changes of this mortal life.

For, indeed, the word "independence" is utterly misleading as a description of the strong man's quality. It is perfectly clear, as soon as we begin to think, that we depend upon our surroundings for everything that we have and are. We are born into the world with certain powers, no doubt; but those powers come to nothing unless circumstances give them opportunity. A child may be born with great powers of scientific research or artistic achievement; but they are of no use unless circumstances give opportunity for their development. In fact, the greater a man's natural powers, the greater is the difference which circumstances will make in him. This is part of the horror of what we call the social problem—that so many divine gifts are simply wasted and come to nothing through lack of opportunity.

It is not only intellectual gifts which depend on our surroundings for their growth; it is equally true of moral gifts. In the Catechism we are first appealed to in our

own names, but are immediately reminded that it is as members of Christ—members of the great body of people who are trying to do Christ's will—that we are called upon to renounce the world, the flesh and the devil, and to obey God's holy will and commandments. We are Christians only because other people have made us so; if we had been born and brought up among savages, we should be savages.

And so it is quite futile for a man to try to be independent and to stand on his own feet. If then we are to avoid being mere moral weather-cocks, swung this way and that by our companions from time to time, what are we to do? We must aim at bringing our lives under influences so powerful and unchanging that they will hold us true whatever distractions or difficulties may arise. We must strike our roots so wide and so deep that the disappointment of this or that expectation, the failure of this or that enterprise, the loss of this or that enjoyment, the load of sorrow or oppression, may leave us steadfast and unmoved.

This is one of the great aims of education,

and while we are at school we should keep it before us. We should never allow the knowledge we acquire to be merely stored up on the shelves of some unused chamber of the mind; we should take care that it has its influence on the whole of our lives. It is possible to increase in learning without increasing in wisdom; but it is our own fault if we do. As we learn more and more of the truth about the world, we ought to be widening the basis of our life. We all know people whose interests are confined to the pleasures and occupations of the moment. Their happiness is made or destroyed by the smallest trifles; they are the playthings of circumstance. If they cannot have their way in small matters, they become sulky; if they lose a game they are miserable. Clearly it is only a very poor sort of life that can be much affected by trifles like these. No educated man ought to be liable to such ups and downs. For the man whose mind is even beginning to be stored with knowledge of the great facts and truths of life will not be disturbed by the chance of every day. Of our philosophy we make small use if we

give place to accidental evils. The man of well-balanced mind is not independent of the world about him, but the world on which he is dependent is so large that no small occurrence shakes him.

Let me try to put all this into relation with the subjects which you study here.

Suppose you are working at natural science. Try to keep in view as your goal that full understanding of this vast universe which will raise you above any petty cares and interests. The man who has so studied the world may be appalled at its vastness, but, if he has not locked his knowledge away in some corner of his life, his whole mind is so stored with living interest that he can never feel himself dependent for his happiness on the supply of amusements or the achievement of trifles.

Or perhaps you are reading history. It seems a mere drudgery, concerned with dates and places; but it is not that; it is an attempt to understand the achievement of mankind, and to see our own lives in the light which is thrown upon them by the exploits of heroes and the struggles of nations. And if you persevere, you will find yourself winning

freedom from small annoyance and anxiety; your purpose and happiness will be independent of your immediate surroundings because you will be becoming dependent on a world so great and full of interest.

And, more than anywhere else, this principle holds good of the study of literature, ancient and modern, the record of the thought and feeling of those men who have felt most keenly and thought most truly. For here what we study is akin to ourselves; it is thought like our own and feeling like our own, all raised to a higher plane. Of course if we read it as so much set work which has to be got through, it will not have any influence upon us. But if we really try to enter into it, to keep our imaginations at work and see what we read with our mind's eye, it will have real power. The man who, in such a play as *Macbeth*, has faced the whole terror of the world, or its horror in *Othello*, or its solemn wonder in *Hamlet*, or its vast grey gloom shot through with anguish in *King Lear*, ought to be able afterwards to meet the little troubles and sorrows of his own life with a good heart.

You will think that I am talking fancifully and that I have forgotten the kind of thing that school-work is. But some of you can already begin to use your reading in the spirit I have been describing, and all of you can aim at making yourselves fit to do so.

Yet when all is said, there is only one power so great and so unchanging that dependence on it frees us once and for all from liability to distraction or despair; it is the power of God, in Whose hands are the forces of nature and the course of history, from Whom we derive the mind to think and the heart to feel. If we can make real to ourselves our dependence upon God, there is nothing that can shake us. "I have put my trust in God," says the Psalmist; "I will not be afraid what man can do unto me." But if our religion is to bring us peace and courage, it must be real. By trusting God we must mean something more than a feeling of His greatness; we must make our plans for our lives in the expectation that God will act and in the assurance that His action will be right and good for us, even when it disappoints our most cherished hopes. But in this sense it

is only on the rarest occasions that any of us trust God at all. The nearest we come to it is a state of mind which we call Resignation; we even speak of Resignation as a virtue, whereas quite plainly it is a form of blasphemy. No one could be resigned to the purpose of Almighty Love. What God ordains for us is bound to be the best—so we shall say, if we have learnt to trust Him as Christ teaches us to trust Him. But we do not believe that. We do not pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done," with triumphant expectation and ungovernable hope; we say, "Well, God's will be done," when we have found that we can't have our own, and reluctantly accept a second best.

All this must be changed if we are to win in any degree that trust in God which gives a man strength and firmness and courage by making him indifferent to all that men or the world can do to him. Let us try to remember God and His will for us when practical matters have to be decided.

But after all it is not men or the circumstances of our lives which hinder us most in

our effort to live as God would have us live; it is ourselves, the weakness of our wills and the feebleness of our devotion. We don't really want very much to serve God; when His service is incompatible with our pleasure, we very much prefer the latter. We may be able to fight when there is fighting to do; but it is hard to keep it up in the dark, cold waiting. So our Lord looks into S. Peter's face as he protests his devotion, and knows that that devotion, though sincere, is feeble. "Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice." And then, in answer to the look of consternation in the faces around Him: "Let not your heart be troubled. Trust God. And trust Me."

Yes; trust Him. For it is He who can strengthen our feeble trust in God. Let us watch His example. He is the one great Hero of the world. Watch His unswerving purpose though His ministry became more and more obviously a failure as its course ran on. Try to realise what it was costing; the repeated disappointments, the disciples' lack of faith and understanding, the rejection by His own

people, the shuddering dread which drew from Him in the Garden "the prayer which He knew could not be granted." And yet, immediately after that Agony, see the calm dignity with which He receives the traitor and how He confronts both Governor and High Priest with the silence that is prouder than speech.

Study the example. But it is more than an example. For those who fix their attention on that figure find themselves transformed into His likeness, till they are constant with His constancy and courageous with His courage. They are able to say that they have no fear, not only of what man can do unto them, but even of what their own nature may do to them, because they trust God and Christ.

We cannot give our trust merely because we determine to do so. Faith which is conscious of its own effort is still half-unbelief. Here as elsewhere, if we are to be strong it must be by receiving strength ; and we receive it as we feed upon Him in our hearts. Never let a day pass without some time given to

thought about Christ; make your Bible-reading regular, careful and attentive; make your Communions regular, earnest, and affectionate. For only so can we find the strength and the courage to face ourselves and the world unflinching.

XXVI

THE POWER AND WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT

May 26, 1912. (*Whitsun Day*)

John, iii. 8.—"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

The religion of the world begins and ends in the sense that we are in the hands of Powers which nothing can withstand, and which shape not only our circumstances but also our characters and conduct. It has a long history from crude superstition to spiritual faith, but everywhere it depends on our sense of the mystery of the world—of "the Power in darkness whom we guess." At times this sense is blunted, and men begin to think that by knowledge and wisdom of their own

they can mould their own lives and the destiny of nations; and their religion wanes until some great disaster shocks them, or some new discovery stirs their sluggish imagination, and we realise again our littleness and helplessness in this vast universe; or sometimes life is restored through the very rebellion of man's untutored spirit against the fetters of thought or practice which prosperity and convention have imposed upon it. Such outbreaks from the depths of our nature may be prompted by good or evil; in either case they carry us out of the routine of a merely conscientious life and bring us nearer Heaven or nearer Hell.

One of these periods of spiritual stagnation was running its course when our Lord's ministry commenced. All over the Mediterranean world religion was dormant. The poorer folk believed the traditional stories and performed the traditional rites; educated people regarded all religious matters as suitable material for cultivated conversation; and some few were trying to revitalise the old faiths by wholesale re-interpretation. Palestine had not escaped. The inspired faith

of Prophets and Priests and Heroes had crystallised into the laborious and ostentatious conscientiousness of Pharisees and the cynical worldliness of Sadducees. There was no atheism or agnosticism—nothing so honest and healthy. There was a dull observance of mechanical rules.

Nicodemus was one of the better representatives of this religious condition. He comes to the new Teacher by night ; he is interested in Him, but the interest must be kept hidden. He begins with compliments—sincere no doubt, but compliments all the same : " Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God ; for no man can do these signs that thou doest except God be with him." But the Lord, as always, goes straight to the central point ; intelligent interest is no good, and compliments are no good ; nothing is any good except that utter devotion of life which will lead a man to break with all his past and all his ambitions and make a new start. " Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus cannot believe in the mere possibility of such a thing ; but he is told that there are some men who are

swept out of their habits and their traditions by the unseen yet irresistible power of the Spirit. "The wind bloweth where it listeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." But for Nicodemus that only makes matters worse; there were appointed channels of the Grace of God—the whole law of Moses, moral and ceremonial; what can be meant by this language about a Power that comes upon people none knows whence and carries them none knows whither? "How can these things be?" But for the Lord and His disciples it was a quite familiar experience, and He turns upon Nicodemus in amazement. "Art thou the teacher of Israel and knowest not these things? Verily, verily I say unto thee, We speak that we do know and bear witness of that we have seen." And because this was something familiar to them, they turned the world upside down. Into a world full of mythologies and rituals there came the little group of people who were always natural and spontaneous, who called God "Father," and who had been taught to find the secret of life in the ways of flowers and birds, and in the doings of simple country-folk.

They were natural and spontaneous because they had felt the impulse of the spirit and trusted themselves to it completely. Their Master had known that Spirit's power; it had driven Him into the wilderness to meet His Temptations. And they had known it too. Their work in the world had begun on the day when a strange Power had come upon them as they were gathered together, and swept them forth as they poured out the inarticulate cries which alone could express an excitement that passed the bounds of language; the cynical called it drunkenness, but those whose hearts were open found their enthusiasm infectious and understood so well by sympathy the meaning of their cries, that it seemed as though the Apostles were actually speaking in the native tongues of all the motley multitude assembled in Jerusalem for that Feast of Pentecost. And this had not remained any unique experience, for over and over again in the primitive Church men "spoke with tongues," uttering sounds that formed no known language, but which could be interpreted by those who were in spiritual sympathy with the speaker. These were the

most startling proofs of the Spirit's presence, but not the only ones or the most important. Men also found that the fruit of the Spirit was Love and Joy and Peace; their inward frame of mind and their outward conduct were alike revolutionised. They came to love their neighbours as themselves.

Gradually their message was accepted; their burning faith was formulated into doctrines and their wonderful life of practical brotherhood hardened into the organisation of the Church. As we watch the history of the Church, we see a steady alternation of periods when the Spirit like a rushing mighty wind carries men before it, and periods when men consolidate and secure the new truth which is so won. Augustine, Francis, Savonarola, Luther, Wesley, Newman—these are names all standing for some manifestation of the Spirit, which proceeds from God and works in the world at His bidding.

We ourselves are living in such a world. Old beliefs and practices are being abandoned or recast. Our whole view of life is undergoing transformation. The comfortable belief that the universe was made for us to

live in it cannot survive the discovery that our world is not the centre of its own system, but a twirling globule playing satellite to a minor star; while even our own life is presumably only a stage in a process called evolution, whose beginning and ending are alike unknown. The comfortable belief that natural processes are the ordinances of a loving God cannot survive the discovery that Nature is to a great extent cruel, purposeless, and full of moral ugliness while man has built for himself a luxurious civilisation whose foundation is the crushed bodies and warped souls of men and women whose chief fault is that they were born in the poorest section of society. If we are to believe in God to-day, it will not be because we were brought up so to believe, and nothing has disturbed our faith, but because we have felt in our own souls the breath of the Spirit and have seen our own lives altered by His power.

> "If e'er when faith had fallen asleep,
> I heard a voice, 'Believe no more,'
> And heard an ever-breaking shore
> That tumbled in the God-less deep;

"A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part,
And like a man in wrath the heart
Stood up and answered, 'I have felt.'"

But it is not only feeling; it is the knowledge that at this point and that our character has been altered and our conduct shaped. Surely all of us can claim such knowledge at least in a small degree. There have been times when we have turned to God in sorrow or weakness and have received the strength and comfort that we needed; there have been times when in prayer or Communion we have found His Presence, and nothing can shake the assurance; there have been times when our actions, our choice of this or that, have been determined by some Power other than ourselves which we have afterwards recognised to be the Power of God. And we know that it is as we hold intercourse with Christ—in reading of the Bible, in prayer, in meditation, in Communion—that this Power comes upon us. It is the Power of Christ crucified.

If we take this knowledge as our clue to the world's problems, we shall no longer find them so entirely baffling; there are in the world

innocent people who suffer—but it is the Innocent Sufferer on Calvary who reveals the nature and glory of God; there are in the world people who deliberately commit sin—but sin was the opportunity for God to make known the wonder of His Love. That changes everything; we begin to see that all our gloom is after all "shade of His hand outstretched caressingly." We begin to see that if "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together" it is "by reason of Him who subjected it in hope." If we take our stand beneath the cross and look out upon the world from there, it is transfigured :—

> "And out of darkness come the hands
> That reach through Nature, moulding men."

"The wind bloweth where it listeth," and we cannot command spiritual experience. We cannot, by merely wishing it, make our prayers real and living, or our hearts warm with love of God and men. But "thou hearest the sound thereof," and we can put ourselves in its course. How are we to do this?

First and foremost is the duty, on which it is impossible to insist too often, of filling our

souls with the thought of Christ. It is not for nothing that in the one great service of the Church we are bidden, every time we come, to feed upon Him in our hearts. This is the one and only Christian discipline, as to love God and men is the only Christian duty. If our lives are to be under the full influence of the Holy Spirit, we must be turning back every day to our reading about Christ and our communing with Him. The Power of God operates throughout the Universe; but it is concentrated in the Life and Death and Resurrection of Christ as the rays are gathered in the focus of a burning-glass, and it is as drawn from Him that it will most affect us.

Secondly let us try to see where the Spirit is undoubtedly at work in the world of our own day. Let us take care that we know what movements and groups of people are its vessels, carried on by its breath to a goal they cannot see; and let us, to the utmost degree, throw in our lot with those movements. The Spirit moves in the world by governing societies and groups of men rather than individuals. It was when the disciples were "all with one accord in one place" that there

came from heaven a sound "as of the rushing of a mighty wind." It is the Church which is the Body of Christ—not the individual believer. Let us listen for the sound of the Spirit's passing, that we may stand where His breath will fall on us. I could mention movements and societies in which I believe the Holy Spirit is plainly operating now ; some of them are connected with the Church, and some do not think themselves religious at all ; but in all we trace the fruits of Love and Joy and Peace. Let us take our part among these that we may give our endeavour and receive their strength.

But perhaps the most practicable method of holding ourselves under the Spirit's influence is this. Live by your own best moments ; be true to your own ideals. It is only now and then that we feel the Spirit's power. High purposes are not formed every day ; visions are rare ; the sense of God's Presence, even while we pray, is not at all frequent. Cling then with all your force to the belief that in those best moments you reached truth and not illusion. Something has stirred us, and we have formed a new resolution ; then the thrill passes

by and we are left with our resolution to fulfil. That is the testing time. In that resolution of ours, to which the Holy Spirit urged us, the power of the Holy Spirit is still to be found if we will only seek it there. The effort to keep it will bring the strength to keep it. For

> "Tasks in hours of insight willed
> In days of gloom must be fulfilled."

Most of us have dry, dead periods; and the keener our devotion, the more acutely do we suffer from them. To those who say that they have never known anything which could be called a sense of the Presence of God, I would answer: You are forgetting God the Holy Ghost; you have ideals and aspirations; they are divine; they are the working of the Holy Spirit in your soul; be loyal to them, and you will find at last that you are being loyal to the Spirit of God. And to those who have in the past felt the glow of real devotion, but feel that now they are cold and dead, forsaken of God, I would answer: You are forgetting God the Holy Ghost; the Spirit is at your side to

help your infirmity, making intercession for you with groanings which cannot be uttered. Moreover it was in the moment when Christ felt Himself to be forsaken of God that He was most unquestionably Divine.

Live then by your best moments and your highest standards. Probably the younger of you find that your standard of conduct here is not so high as it is at home; try to let nothing find a place in your school life which you would be sorry to admit to your life at home. And probably the elder of you—especially those who here hold posts of responsibility—find that your standards slacken and deteriorate in the holidays; but remember that, though our responsibility is less direct and less impressed upon us there than here, we are still responsible before God for every minute of our time and every tittle of our influence.

So holding to the best we have known, we shall find in our own lives the Power of God, and we shall know it for the Power that rules the world. We shall make answer to the perplexities of others and to the doubts of our own souls as they arise. How

do you know, men ask, that there is any God for you to worship? And we answer: I know it because I have met with Him and have spoken with Him. He has guided me like a father, He has counselled me like a friend, He has loved me like a brother, He has died for me like Jesus Christ. I am more sure of the reality of God than of the reality of my own flesh and bones or of the house I live in. The source of this Power that governs me I do not know; the goal to which it leads I cannot tell. "The wind bloweth where it listeth," but I have heard its sound, I have felt its breath; "we speak that we do know and testify that we have seen."

XXVII

CREATION AND REDEMPTION

June 9, 1912.

Gen. i. 3.—"And God said, Let there be light, and there was light."

Heb. ii. 10.—"It became him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

MANY of our false conceptions in regard to religion arise from our tendency to follow imagination rather than conscience. Thus, for instance, we look out upon the vast world in which we live, and allow our minds to be so overwhelmed with the wonder of it that we find ourselves asking whether human life can count for very much in it, and whether what we do can really matter. Yet conscience perpetually insists that the moral nature of man is the greatest thing we know, and that

a child's choice between right and wrong matters more than the courses of the stars.

And because we lose a sense of this true proportion of things, we often think quite wrongly about God and our relation to Him. We think of the splendour of his work in Creation ; we compare our futility with His power ; we are rebuked when His voice replies to our doubts and speculations : " Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth . . . when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy." We adore Him and humble ourselves before Him, but we do not fear Him, for it seems most unlikely that He is taking any notice of us ; and we do not love Him because to offer our love would seem a sheer impertinence and because there is in power nothing which can call out love.

But the Creation is not the crowning achievement of God. Creation is easy. " Let there be light, and there was light." The command produces at once its own fulfilment. There is no resistance or disobedience. Everywhere the Divine Will is carried out ; " And God saw everything that he had made

and behold it was very good." But in the great myth of Genesis that judgment is pronounced before Man has risen or fallen to the knowledge of good and evil.

The effort and the cost begin when the task is the moulding not of a universe but of a character. We who look back on the Creation as a long process of evolution may trace evil in its workings from the earliest that we know; but in any case, it is with the emergence of Man that the power of evil begins to show its full force and that the task of God becomes severe. Men can think and plan their lives; we regard some animals as cruel or spiteful, but only man as deliberately wicked. This power to think out the course of our lives and follow a purpose in the light of the knowledge of good and evil is what makes us capable of entering into fellowship with God; "ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil"; but as it may make us more like God, so also it may make us more like devils. The good man perpetually following a noble purpose is but a little lower than the angels; but the bad man deliberately following an evil purpose is a great deal lower than the beasts.

"It is very unhappy," says Emerson, "but too late to be helped, the discovery we have made, that we exist. That discovery is called the Fall of Man." We compare ourselves with other people, with our own past and with what we hope we may become; we are self-conscious. If we could not reflect we should always act spontaneously; our actions might be good or bad, but they would not be right or wrong. It is because we can reflect upon our conduct and sit in judgment on ourselves, that we are responsible for all we do. Even when we do not pause to think, but act upon a sudden impulse, it is still true that we might have thought what we were doing, and it is our fault that we did not, so that to plead "I never thought" is not an excuse, but a confession of guilt.

Through this power of thinking out their lives men may be lifted to great heights or may sink to great depths. And it is in leading men away from the depths towards the heights that God's task begins. In the physical creation, His command produces at once its own fulfilment: "Let there be light; and there was light." But here it is not so; here

the command is ignored or deliberately disobeyed. And the Bible always pictures this defiance of the Divine Will against the background of the disappointment and "dreadful astonishment of God." "What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" "He looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry." "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." "O my people, what have I done unto thee? And wherein have I wearied thee? Testify against me." These bold sayings in the Old Testament do not stand for something transitory, which passed away when the Revelation was complete. The full Revelation of God in Jesus of Nazareth retains these marks: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem. . . how often would I have gathered thy children together . . . and ye would not." "If thou hadst known, even thou; at least in this thy day the things that belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes." "Have I been so long with

you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" When the supreme crisis came, after preparing the disciples, the Son of God "began to be greatly amazed and sore troubled"; it was not only sorrow, but astonishment that His bearing seemed to denote. At last He is reduced to despair. He had come to redeem the world, to win it, that is to say, for the Kingdom; and the whole thing was a failure and a mockery: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

That is the parable of what it costs God to win His children to Himself; their defiance outrages and amazes Him; His efforts are baffled and His Love repulsed. Creation was easy; but Redemption is infinitely difficult, and God Himself must suffer disappointment and despair before he can look upon His completed work.

Now turn from all that to our own standards. What are the things for which we are ready to take most trouble? Are they the same things for which God is ready to submit to pain, disappointment, and despair? Of course, when we stop to think, we know that our moral character matters far more

than our worldly success, but we don't often stop to think, and for the most part we leave our characters to form themselves as best they may. Apart from the grosser vices, we do not regard moral blemishes as very terrible; if a man is pleasant in company we very easily overlook the fact that he is rather selfish, or that he is inconsiderate to those beneath him; such things we do not regard as a great calamity; but if he fails in his profession or loses his money in an unfortunate investment, we are full of pity for him, while the possibility of such an occurrence in our own lives fills us with horror.

We have not grasped in the smallest degree the nature of our moral responsibility. We forget the joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth; we forget that our sin is committed to the astonishment and agony of God.

That is what is involved in our yielding to evil desires, or leaving duty neglected. That is what is involved when we let our minds run on low or unclean thoughts. Have we ever faced what it means? We think of the consequences of our wrong doing to ourselves

and to other people. But it is not we only who are concerned. Our surrender to evil is the defeat of God; our indulgence in evil is defiance of God. It is the purpose of God and the welfare of all creation which is at stake. And the question at issue for all of us is not, Shall I be good or bad? but—Shall I by the help of God rise from stage to stage till I can live in permanent fellowship with God or shall I in defiance of God become something viler than the lowest of the beasts? For as human virtue is the noblest thing in the world, so human wickedness is the vilest.

If we believe this, we shall be very rigorous in our self-examination. We shall have done with drifting; we shall no longer leave our characters to form themselves as best they may, while we make our plans for the pleasure of the moment. We shall no longer do merely what people about us seem to expect. But we shall search every corner and cranny of our minds that we may make them altogether pure and upright. We shall be as regular and careful in the purging of our souls as in the cleansing of our bodies.

For here is the real issue of our lives, and

not only of ours, but of Life itself. Life is a perilous thing. It is impossible to exaggerate its issues. And if we are to play our part worthily we must be watchful. Let me say something about the self-examination that we need.

In the first place it must be regular and fairly frequent. Most of us postpone it indefinitely, or neglect it altogether. It will not come into our minds of itself that we should enquire into our moral state ; we are not liable to think about our soul's health spontaneously unless we are intolerable prigs. And yet we need to think of it. So we need fixed times for doing it. Those of us who have been confirmed should do it just before coming to the Holy Communion ; the others should set apart some fixed time, such as the first Saturday in each month. Let us in addition to our evening prayers, or even instead of them, look back at such times over our lives. If we neglect this we may drift very far before we know what has happened ; we may find that a habit has gripped us which we cannot hope to shake off without a long struggle ; we may find that through mere carelessness of our

speech or action someone else has been led very far wrong and perhaps had his whole life blighted.

We must remember this as we turn to self-examination; and remembering it we must ask ourselves certain questions. Am I keeping myself perfectly honest, perfectly truthful, and perfectly pure? Am I loyal to my duty as I see it? Am I trying to find out what my duty is? Am I becoming less selfish and less worldly? Is there anything whatever which I do because I am a Christian which I should not do otherwise?

And as we ask ourselves these questions, and find ourselves guilty under most, let us remember the pain and the horror of God which our wrongdoing causes. As Christ confronted the evil of the world He prayed: "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me"; and shall we mock His prayer by filling that cup to the brim?

XXVIII

COMMEMORATION OF THE FOUNDING OF THE CHAPEL

June 30, 1912.

Psalm lv. 14.—"We took sweet counsel together and walked in the house of God as friends."

S. Matt. v. 44–48.—"Love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be the sons of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the Gentiles the same? Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

By a natural instinct all our strongest emotions seek expression in religion, and by finding such expression make themselves yet stronger. This is not due with most of us to any conscious thought of a duty to consecrate

what is closest to our hearts; it is either a quite unrationalised impulse, or a desire to raise what most concerns us into the spiritual world in order that it may become eternal. Only the great phrases of religion are adequate to express a really strong emotion; only in the Presence of God dare we utter our deepest feelings.

For we are very self-conscious about our feelings; partly because they are sacred, partly because our words are so clumsy, partly from mere shyness, we shrink from expressing them. And then, because we shrink ourselves from self-expression, we become suspicious and even contemptuous of those who are less reserved; and this attitude of ours makes them in turn self-conscious where they might have been spontaneous. There is a whole tangle of influences hampering spontaneity. I have often envied a dog the privilege he enjoys of shewing his affection for his master without any one thinking that he is making a fool of himself.

But there is a reason for our reserve and reticence; for we are not sure of ourselves; our self-discipline is so imperfect that we dare

not give our feelings free expression as they arise. Only Christ could allow Himself such freedom with safety. He wept over Jerusalem before the sun and before the Pharisees; His anger blazed out unrestrained against selfishness and hollowness; because there was no danger that His anger could be self-righteous or His sorrow sentimental. His heroic character could trust itself completely; because He was meek, He was courageous; because He had forgotten Himself, He could offer battle to the world. But we need to hold ourselves in. It is only where some strong influence controls us that we can safely give our feelings rein. And only in the Presence of God do we find an influence strong and pure enough to make it safe for us to be perfectly spontaneous. It is here that we can utter all that is in our hearts. And so our friendships reach their height when we bring them before God. There is no more intimate description of friendship than the Psalmist's :—"We took sweet counsel together and walked in the House of God as friends."

But while this spontaneity is possible to

us in worship, very few of us make use of the opportunity. We make our church-going a solemn function, for which we put on our most expensive clothes—an odious practice which at once makes it difficult for our poorer fellow-citizens to join in our public worship and suggests to ourselves that in the House of God we are not sons and daughters in their home, but visitors paying a call.

We are commemorating at this service the founding of the School Chapel; and the supreme merit of a school chapel is that it gives no excuse for such formalism and self-consciousness. Here we come day by day as a matter of course; we come not merely as individuals but as members of the school. It is the school that worships. And old boys know very well that the life of the school flows more strongly here than anywhere else, stronger than in House or Classroom or playing-fields. Our fellowship with one another and our affection for our friends finds its expression here, and in finding expression becomes more real.

If that were all, it would be a great deal; but also if that were all, any pagan shrine

would do as well. All the religions of the world have been powerful to cement friendships already existing. If our worship is Christian in spirit as well as form it must do more than that. "If ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the Gentiles the same?"

It is a common reproach of our Public Schools that, while they stimulate a strong public spirit in their own life, they do not teach their sons to shew the same devotion to the nation or the Church as they shew in their schoolboy days to the school. It is said that Public School men constitute an exclusive clique and find it hard to work with any but members of that clique. If it be so, or in whatever degree it is so, the fault must lie very largely in the spirit of our worship. It is not enough that we should honour God and fear Him; the average Mohammedan does that. It is not enough that we should feel the mystery of His Presence and the reality of the eternal world; the Brahmin does that, and the Greek who was initiated at Eleusis did

that. It is required of us that we should love Him with all our souls ; and the test of our love for God is to be found in the width and the depth of our love for men.

What then are we to expect of our worship, if it is Christian worship, in this school chapel ? We should expect to find our outlook widening and our sympathies deepening. The work of Christ leaves no one neglected ; His love passes none over. And if we are being touched with His spirit, the same will be true of us. If any man thinks that the dumb need of the heathen world for what Christ alone can give is no concern of his, that man has not the spirit of Christ. If any thinks that the destitution of our own poor is no concern of his, that man has not the spirit of Christ. If any thinks that he has done all his duty by a tramp or beggar when he has refused to give him money, that man has not the spirit of Christ. If any thinks that the smarting sense of injustice in our manual workers—growing steadily stronger and more sincere and expressing itself in continued Labour Unrest and repeated Strikes—is no concern of his,

that man has not the spirit of Christ. "Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

Most of us are content with a nominal Christianity while the essence of our religion is merely the common instinctive religion of men. For the most part we have no conception of the duty of a Christian. We are content to love our friends and, even if we avoid hating anyone, to be indifferent to more than half the world. We bring our friendships to Christ for His blessing; and He rebukes us with the question: "If ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others?"

Is our school a Christian school? It is, I am bold to say, a religious school; but is it a Christian school? Are we learning here to care keenly for the feelings and the needs of men whose training has been different from ours? or is our own education making it more difficult for us to enter into sympathy with those whose education has been of another kind or who have had practically none at all? All our fellowship here and our friendships, the strengthening of our characters and the enrichment of our minds, our ambitions and

our sacrifices for other people—all falls short of Christ's demand unless through all there runs a growing sense of fellowship and friendship with all God's children. All the sincerity of our prayers and praises falls short; the intensest emotion in our worship goes for nothing if it leaves our love unstirred; we may speak with the tongues of men and angels, but if we have not love, as Christ reveals it, we might as well be beating cymbals and tambourines in the orgies of Dionysus. Is our school a Christian school?

There is only one means by which it can be either made or kept so, and that is the openness of heart and freshness of imagination with which day by day we enter the presence of our Master, Jesus of Nazareth. If we have really felt the Divine Power which works in Him, and have formed any picture of His Life, we may leave in His hands the work of making us His followers.

We are always apt to think of the Love of God as the august pursuit of some purpose of general benevolence, carried out with strict attention to detail and overmastering authority—the sort of benevolence which,

when shewn by a human official, is more odious than cruelty itself. But if Christ is the revelation of God, the Love of God is not like that. We watch Him when the consciousness of His Messiahship first becomes complete at His Baptism; He goes into the wilderness to meet the Temptations which this new conviction brings; at the end of the Temptation He has stripped His office of all the trappings in which Isaiah or Daniel had presented it; He has left nothing but the great commission to proclaim the kingdom of God. He comes proclaiming. Is He the stern corrector of morals and manners? Not at all. He is the sunniest figure in history. His message is of joy and emancipation, and He Himself is full of love and joy and peace. He showers benefits on "deserving" and "undeserving" alike, even as God sends rain upon the just and the unjust. He goes about among men frank, spontaneous, generous; and His life is reflected in His teaching, where all the images are drawn from out-door country life, or from the homes of simple folk.

But a change came. The indifference and opposition of men turned the Teacher to whom

men flocked into the Fugitive with His twelve companions; until at last we see Him striding before them with face set hard to go to Jerusalem, and His disciples following, wondering and afraid. He challenges authority and precipitates the Passion. Yet He shrank from it. "If it be possible let this cup pass from me." And at the end despair takes hold of Him. His disciples have forsaken Him; no one believes in Him except a condemned criminal at His side; and He is dying. What wonder that He cries: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

What wonder? But there is wonder when we remember that it is God whose agony we watch; it is God whose despair we witness; the anguish of soul that we behold is what we are costing God.

There is no laborious conscientiousness in the Love of God. We see in the Christ of the early ministry what it fain would be—calling the children to Him, welcome at wedding feasts, generous and uncensorious. But our coldness changes that sunny, frank, spontaneous affection into the passionate intensity of the tragic Hero Who marches before His

followers to Jerusalem, and goes out in solitude to die, we repel the Love of God and turn it in upon itself, so that He Who would have carried us with Him in joy must go forth alone bearing His Cross.

There is wonder in the story when we have heard the words, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." And in that wonder lies the hope of our salvation—the hope, that is, that our hearts and wills may be changed, and filled with God's own spirit of love and service.

O dearest Saviour, Thou Word and Revelation of the Father; purge us by the power of Thy Love from pride and prejudice, from boasting over the past and ambition for the future; take our lives and our school into Thine own hands and so use us in prosperity, in poverty or through death that, so far as lies in us, Thy Kingdom may come and Thy Will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

XXIX

REVEALED UNTO BABES

July 7, 1912.

S. Matthew xi. 25, 26.—"At that season Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes: yea, Father, for so it was well pleasing in thy sight."

THE words are the expression of a bitter disappointment. They follow upon the woes pronounced on Bethsaida, Chorazin and Capernaum. These were the great centres of population and influence in the neighbourhood. Our Lord had appealed to them, but the appeal had failed. They seemed the strategic points which any movement must occupy if it could hope for success; and he had been driven from them—driven from them by their indifference to His message and quite equally by their foolish and unspiritual excitement

about His miracles. We remember how such excitement seized on Capernaum at the very start, and how in consequence our Lord rose a great while before dawn and went out of the town that He might be alone in prayer. In spite of entreaties from S. Peter and the rest He left Capernaum and began to preach in the villages and the countryside. Men were startled by His miracles; but there was no spiritual perception; no moral appreciation in their astonishment; they were moved to excitement and curiosity, but not to repentance. In the great towns the Lord had failed.

And the people who seemed capable of understanding Him, or were even beginning to do so, were not of a kind to be influential. The movement gained no strength, but apparently rather weakness, from its recruits. They cut no figure before the world; they were rather ignorant men, and of no social standing. Their adherence was no promise of ultimate success in the immense task which their Master had undertaken. He is confronted with bitter disappointment, shewn in the words, "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight." Yet He is sure that God

has called Him to found the Kingdom, and that all His experience in the work must be part of God's plan; so He does not merely acquiesce, but accepts the facts with thankfulness. "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; . . . even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight." And at once He goes on to make the greatest claim and to offer the sublimest invitation that ever were heard from human lips: "All things are delivered unto Me of My Father . . . Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

What then is meant by this ordinance of God that the highest truth is hidden from the wise and understanding, and revealed unto babes? Or what is meant by the parallel requirement, "Except ye be converted and become as little children ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven"?

Quite clearly it is a warning that it is not by increase of knowledge or by intellectual ability that we make ourselves fit for the Kingdom of God. No amount of thinking will ever lead by itself to the knowledge of God as the religious man knows God.

Does our Lord then require us to abandon the exercise of our reason altogether, and care only for purity of heart and dedication of purpose? Not so did S. Paul understand Him: "Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit, in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men."

I think it helps us to see what our Lord means when we remember that this same requirement of a childlike heart is made of all who would master the secrets of the world, and not only of those who aim at the vision of spiritual truth. The man of science as much as anyone else must be humble and childlike. He must put aside his own prejudices and be ready to follow his evidence. He must come to his subject every day as a child might come to it, not supposing that his opinions are final truth, but ready to receive new light from any and every quarter. Nothing could be more fatal to him than a determination to hold to his own opinions. He must be open-minded and free from prejudice.

The same is true of every department of study. It is quite true that knowledge may

make men conceited; "knowledge puffeth up"; but in whatever degree it does this it makes its own further development impossible.

It is not then against the fullest use of our minds that our Lord is warning us; on the contrary the temper He condemns is as fatal to intellectual as to spiritual achievement. He warns us not against knowledge, but against the conceit of knowledge; not against wisdom but against worldly wisdom, the wisdom that comes most easily to a privileged class. The Jews were such a privileged class; to them had been given the oracles of God; they were justly proud of being entrusted with the knowledge of truths concealed from other men. But they suffered for their privilege as almost all men have suffered for any privilege allowed them. They were not only proud of what they had, but they were disposed to regard other nations as having nothing at all comparable with it, and to resist any attempt to modify or develop the beliefs they had inherited. Our Lord is perpetually pointing out to them that their very privileges were won by prophets

and heroes who in their own generation had been ready to receive new light and venture on great experiments, and that the people who build tombs and raise memorials for the prophets of previous generations are the same people who stone the prophets of their own.

All of this is no more true of the history of Israel than of any other nation. It is for example quite abundantly true of our own. Let us take only one instance; it was in the inspiration of Christ that Wilberforce and his friends led the movement for the abolition of slavery; but for a long while the mass of Church-goers opposed them, and the Bishops opposed them to the end. Now, of course, we all unite to praise them; but we are by no means so united in our support of those who in our own day carry on their work by trying to destroy economic slavery as they destroyed legal slavery. Many of those who would be loudest in their praise of the pioneer of earlier progress are loudest also in their denunciation of the pioneers in their own time.

It is a natural consequence of any form of prosperity that it breeds contentment, and this easily passes into self-complacency.

This is what had opposed our Lord's work in the flourishing cities of Galilee; this is what still opposes it in our own souls or our own society. And people who are full of the very temper which our Lord condemns have quoted His words as a defence for their stupidity and mental sluggishness. But the mind of an ordinary child is neither stupid nor sluggish; it is exceedingly alert; it is not deadened by familiarity to the wonder of the world; it appreciates the plain facts more vividly than most grown people can do. Sometimes the child also expresses these plain facts to the serious embarrassment of less candid elders.

To retain this freshness of vision as knowledge increases is not the mark of stupidity, it is the mark of genius; it is the distinguishing characteristic of the great poet or painter or scientist. And the quality which our Lord demands is precisely freshness of vision, spontaneous sympathy and quick appreciation. It is true that the man of great intellectual power finds this demand no easier to meet than the man whose wits are slow. It is possible for all and difficult for all. It lies

within the reach of every one, though none will achieve it easily. And in thus making fundamental something possible to all, God has proclaimed the truth that the points in which all men are alike are more important than the points in which they differ, a principle, by the way, which is the root foundation of democracy.

Intellectual power is a great treasure, but it is curious how very little it counts for in the supreme crises of life, unless it is found in combination with the childlike heart. A man may work his way by the most cogent reasoning to a belief in God, and find himself helpless before calamity, or sin, or death, where another, who is incapable of philosophy, is active with all the vigour of a living faith. A man may find himself driven by the force of reason to the denial of all faith in God, and yet pour out his prayers in the time of his necessity and know with unshakable assurance that his prayers are heard. Even for the intellectual genius, a grasp on spiritual things is made possible not by his head but by his heart.

This may lead us to understand why

humility is often described as the distinctively Christian virtue. The very essence of humility is self-forgetfulness. A conceited man may be very silent or very talkative; but his silence is contemptuous and his talk is didactic. A humble man also may be very silent or very talkative, but he himself will hardly know which. The rule which appears in such trifles as these covers a wide field of conduct. The humble man of childlike heart approaches his task without thinking what figure he will cut; he does not wonder what other people are thinking about him, because he does not suppose they are thinking about him at all; he thinks only of what needs to be done, and for that reason he does it very much better.

Not only will he do his work better; he will understand Christ better, and he will know God better. He will not come to his religion prepared to insist that God shall approve what he approves and condemn what he condemns, making God in his own image. He will come to understand God as a man tries to understand his friend, that is by watching him in sympathy. He will not want everyone to

believe just what he believes, even in religious or moral matters, but he will maintain his own belief with all his force that others may find in it what he has found if they can or will.

We try to convert the world to Christianity. Is it because the love and joy of Christ has so filled our hearts that they are overflowing with it? Or is it, just in part, because we want to make other people submit to the religion which happens to be ours? If the former motive is what inspires us, Foreign Missions are the noblest work in the world; if the latter, they are degraded to be the most impudent and the most offensive. We care for the honour of our House and School. Is it because love of the School has taken possession of us or because we personally have a reputation to keep up? Let us be earnest about our duty; but let us remember that part of our duty is to be sympathetic with every man alive, and never by our censoriousness to make virtue odious to our neighbour. It is a bad thing to be slack or indifferent about questions of right or wrong; in people entrusted with responsibility such slackness is

almost as wicked as personal wrong-doing; but not very much better would be a self-centred and self-conscious virtue which is incapable of sympathy with average humanity and would force all into the mould of its own rigid conscience.

All that I am saying is of course applicable only to those who are trying to follow their consciences. The deliberate evil-doer stands outside the reach of these considerations. What we have to realise is that there is a right way and a wrong way even of being conscientious. We have seen our Lord's disappointment at His failure among the religious leaders and in the great centres of influence; that disappointment ripens at last into one of the most terrible of His denunciations: "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves." Those words were spoken to conscientious people.

There are two safe rules by following which we may avoid the wrong way. One is that we should not suppose that those defects from which we happen to be free are worse than

those which we have; and the other is that we should always be more strict with ourselves than with other people. If we can keep these two rules we may safely set up a high standard of conduct, without danger of becoming harsh or unsympathetic, for we shall always know of faults in ourselves identical or equivalent with those which we condemn in others.

While we are young we find it easy to be open and spontaneous; let us try to keep the most excellent of the child's graces. For if we lose it, our very goodness may harden into something far from winsome. We have heard of the man who tried so to live that men might believe the Gospel to be true; we have also to live so that men may think it beautiful and attractive. It is a terrible thing if one is virtuous in such a way as to make men think virtue odious.

XXX

SCHOOL-AFFECTION

July 28, 1912.

S. Luke, xxiv. 32.—"Was not our heart burning within us, while he spake to us in the way, while he opened to us the scriptures?"

Few stories in the New Testament have laid hold of the Christian imagination so strongly as that of the two disciples who walked out to Emmaus on the evening of the first Easter Day. We see them walking together across the lengthening shadows, talking over the strange things that had happened in the last few days. Their Master—probably they never knew till then how they had loved Him—their Master had been killed. They had lost their dearest Friend; and they felt that in Him the world had lost its Saviour, for they "hoped it was He which

should redeem Israel." Moreover it was reported that His tomb had been found empty and that angels had declared Him to be alive. Of course they did not believe it; and yet—yet were there not strange sayings of His in those dear days now gone for ever, sayings of how the Son of Man should suffer and the third day rise again? And that very day was the third day. They had not known what He meant; they did not know now. Anyhow, He had died; they had lost Him; and we watch them walking on as the evening darkens, with a sadness in their soul which holds down the tumult of joy surging up against it.

Then a Stranger joins them. They do not ask where He comes from; nor do we. In that dreamy sadness it is appropriate that He should come from nowhere in particular. He "drew near," the story says, "and went with them." He asks what they are speaking so earnestly about. "And they stood still, looking sad." Then one of them explains, and draws from Him the rebuke, "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken. Be-

hoved it not the Christ to suffer?" He walks on with them, drawing out the deeper meaning of the Scriptures they knew by heart. He joins them at their evening meal; then the characteristic gesture, so familiar to them, as He breaks the bread, reveals in a flash who the Stranger is; and He is vanished.

What is the first thought that rises in their minds? the first feeling that they express? Is it the certainty that their friend is alive? Is it the knowledge that God has vindicated His Christ? Is it the hope of the redemption of the world? No; it is the thought of their own feelings while He had been speaking. "Was not our heart burning within us while He spake to us in the way while He opened to us the scriptures?"

It is always so; while men are human, they will care most intimately for human feelings—far more than for great causes or profound truths. It is not that we set a higher value on our feelings than on the cause or the truth; if need be, we can sacrifice our feelings to them; we can put all sentiment sternly aside for the efficiency

of our work or the triumph of some principle. But we don't like it. It needs an effort of will; our inclinations lie the other way. And we only enjoy our work when duty and inclinations coincide. So it is not the high moral character of our friends, but rather their personal peculiarities, that call out our affection. When we think of our times spent in their company, the first things that arise in our minds are not the great plans that we have laid, nor the earnest conversations we have had, nor the tasks we have fulfilled together; the first things that arise are the times that we have laughed together, for it is in them that the personal traits and peculiarities came out clearly. The earnestness of one man is very like the earnestness of another; Duty is too august to let individual differences count for much in her presence. Moreover, when men are serious, they shew us rather what they want to be than what they are; but laughter is the one expression of emotion which we allow ourselves to indulge in unrestrained. We conceal sorrow and anger; but to merriment we yield openly. And so it is in merriment that we come closest to a man

—not to what he aims at being, but to what he is. George Eliot says in an often-quoted phrase:—"A difference of taste in jokes is a great strain on the affections." But we may go further:—Without identity of taste in jokes, affection is almost impossible, because there will be little spontaneity. It is in laughter that men come closest to each other.

And you will find as you leave here that the first memories which return to you, when you think of Repton or meet with Old Reptonians who were in the school with you, will be the things you laughed at. A maturer criticism will find some of the jokes rather crude and void of subtlety, but still you will recall them because of the freshness of enjoyment which they occasioned at the time. They will be the first memories, though not the only ones nor the last. And it is well that it should be so; for it is the proof that your feeling for the school is not merely gratitude or reverence, but is genuine personal affection.

I believe there are few schools which twine themselves about the hearts of their members

quite as Repton does; I am sure that no school does so more completely. This hold on our affections which the school has makes parting sadder, but it makes life happier; and, above all, it makes the school better and greater. For we come to feel every stain upon its honour as a personal grief, and every success it wins is the success of a friend.

Those first memories of the lighter things will not be the only memories nor the last. When by means of them you are brought back in spirit to the old school days you will begin to remember also all the great things that the school has meant to you—the discipline of irksome form-work, of obedience to authority, of responsibility; the high ideals with which you were confronted; contact with the great minds of other ages than our own; the purifying influence of a corporate life whose tone is sound; the strengthening of your characters through the effort to help those who were weaker than yourselves. You will think sometimes of your own services to the school, and I know that many of those who leave this term can look

back on many such services; but these will not loom very large. In the memory of the fun we had at school, our own personalities fill a great space; but as our minds move on to the great things, we ourselves sink out of sight; even our friends count for little then; it is the school itself, with all the generations who have both made it and been made by it, that engrosses all attention. And then our thoughts will turn to the Chapel, and we shall remember how in our worship there we have, sometimes at least, felt that we were parts of the whole life of the school and that the life of the school is in the same way part of something larger still.

And so, if we do not check ourselves, we shall be carried on to the Divine Master, Whose Spirit is the source of all that is best here; we may be able to recall times when we felt He was very near to us and we shall know that He was very near even when we did not realise His Presence at all. We shall see that all we really valued was leading us to Him; that the suppression of ourselves for the sake of House and School,

the avoidance of self-seeking, the growth of loyalty, all flow from His Spirit of sacrifice and bring us closer to Himself. And as you realise that in all your life here He had drawn near though you knew Him not, and was expounding to you the things concerning Himself, your hearts will burn within you.

Don't let those feelings, or the feelings that are strong in you just now, pass away without some fruit. There are few things so enervating as the indulgence in feeling—especially in tender and religious feeling—when no action results from it. Turn your feelings into resolutions ; let your will register them and your life express them. You have learnt here to know what is meant by membership in a society ; you have learnt to care for the honour and welfare of the community more than for any pleasure or advantage of your own ; indeed it is this loyalty and love for the school that makes leaving it sad Do not now sink back into yourselves, so that your own advantage or that of your families becomes your chief motive of action ; rather let your interests

and sympathies widen still further, till you care for your Nation, for the Church, and at last for all Mankind as you now care for the school. You have had your training in citizenship in pleasant places; go and practise what you have learnt in the hard unsympathetic world.

For it is a grim world in which our qualities are tested;—a world where through our selfishness thousands are hungry and homeless, and where under the pressure of pain and sin the very existence of God seems to many men incredible; a world that has lost its hope and has fallen back on pleasure-seeking and indulgence. Fifty years ago the most serious literature of our country was full of hope and confidence; it is not so now; the most serious literature of our own time is full of gloom, and the life it depicts is purposeless. And what is wanted, if the faith of our people is to revive, is the plain proof in the lives of men that the Spirit of Christ still rests upon His followers, and those who worship Him are ready to help all who are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness or any other adversity.

And the more eager you are to carry out in life what you have learnt here, so much the more frequently and vividly will the memory of your school life return to you. If you are hoping that the love of Repton may never fade in your hearts, then live like worthy sons of Repton, who have learnt here the magic fascination of the love of Christ, in any quarter of the world where you may be. So the love of your school and of your school-friends will remain with you for ever.

That is my parting word for you this summer. Ask God forgiveness for your failures; thank Him for His abundant blessings given to you here; and then go forth to serve Him all your lives as in gratitude and duty bound.

And the God of all love, Who is the source of our affection for each other, take our friendships formed here into His own keeping, that they may continue and increase throughout life and beyond it.

O God, the God of all goodness and of all grace, who art worthy of a greater love than we can either give or understand; fill our hearts, we beseech Thee, with such love towards Thee, that nothing may seem too hard for us to do or to suffer in obedience to Thy will. And grant that thus loving Thee, we may become daily more like unto Thee, and finally obtain the crown of life which Thou hast promised to those that love Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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